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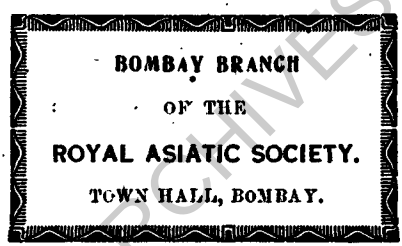

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A TURNING POINT

IN THE INDIAN MUTINY

BY

I. GIBERNE SIEVEKING

AUTHOR OF

'MEMOIR AND LETTERS OF FRANCIS W. NEWMAN'

31871

'Theirs is the battle! Theirs wholly.
For that Day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever:—
So, let them have the Spurs, and the glory'

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'No man who is not endowed with a comprehensive imagination can govern India with success . . . . . Dalhousie had no imagination.'
SIR JOHN KAYE

'I believe it would be better for the land in which we live, *if India appealed more than it does to our imagination.* The interest so created . . . . . would help to bridge over the gap between East and West.'—MACPHAIL.

'The defence of Arrah may be considered one of the most remarkable feats in Indian history.'—SIR VINCENT EYRE.

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TURNING POINT IN THE INDIAN MUTINY

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PREFACE

THIS book aims at throwing a light on a very crucial time in our Empire's history.

It aims at lighting up that part of England's memory which is concerned with a certain siege which, happened more than fifty years ago, lest she forget splendid deeds done by heroic Englishmen in the Indian Mutiny; men who, at out-of-the-way stations, fought against gigantic odds, with only a few troops to support them—fought, and saved their country's colours.

These were the men who held up the lamp of the Ideal high above the heads of their fellow-men. Would there were more of them here to-day in England! Men, who simply *could* not be discouraged by any amount of failure, by any amount of discouragement. They were aware of the inner meaning of those inspiring words: 'how far High Failure overleaps the bounds of low successes.' And

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though for many of them, the last words that sounded in their dying ears were those of 'defeat' and 'disaster,' though the bitter taste of the fruit of War was on their lips, and ghastly sights met their eyes, theirs was the unconquerable spirit which can die, and yet remain at the supreme moment of death—*victor, in spite of all.*

To-day in the hearts of many the light of Chivalry has burned very dim; that of Reverence flickers low; while the power of Idealising lights comparatively few. The following pages are full of the deeds of some of the greatest heroes the world has ever seen; and in almost all these men the fires of Chivalry,[1] Reverence, and the power of the Ideal, allied with absolute pluck and heroism, burned high.

I should like to express my hearty thanks to those who so kindly lent me old records,

[1] To-day, as these pages go to press, I have heard of a doctor's rare act of chivalry. (I should state he was not in good financial circumstances at the time.) He had been for many weeks attending a patient at her request (though she only needed him temporarily, and was not one of his regular *clientèle*), and at the end of her illness he refused to accept any return whatever, simply because to have taken any fee, would have seemed, in his eyes, to be contrary to what he conceived to be the true spirit of Chivalry.

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letters, papers and photos. Among these I would mention the names of Mr. Herwald Wake and Mr. J. C. Colvin, to both of whom I owe a *very* special debt of thanks. Also those of Major Leather, of the 5th Fusiliers, General Broadfoot, Sir George Trevelyan, Dr. Theodore Maxwell (who kindly gave me permission to use the letters of John Nicholson), Miss Lucy Wake, Miss Bax-Ironside (who most kindly allowed me access to her father's papers), Mrs. Radcliffe, Surgeon-General Sir James Thornton, K.C.B., Lady Fayrer, Mr. Stafford Bailey, Mrs. Ross Mangles, Mrs. McDonell, and many others. To one friend I am indebted for his great kindness in reading my MSS., and stating (he was one of the besieged party at Arrah) that what I have written is correct.

I. GIBERNE SIEVEKING.

EXMOUTH PLACE, HASTINGS,
February 1910.

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A TURNING POINT
IN
THE INDIAN MUTINY

WHAT is it that strikes one most keenly when one looks at the events of the Mutiny of 1857? Surely this: the great lack of imagination in the ranks of English officials out in India at that time. Indeed it was so palpable, so insistent, that it practically amounted to a sort of mental colour-blindness. For the signs of the times were significant enough; patent enough, one would have thought, in all conscience. And what is more, they were happening daily before the eyes of soldier, civilian, and government official. Those who knew the native most, who could put two and two together, foretold the mutiny long before it came—Sir Henry Lawrence prophesied its probable course fourteen years before it came—but to no effect. It is one thing to warn, another thing to take the

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warning, and the English Government in India chose not to be warned. They rode blindly—wilfully blindly, for their fall, and they got it.

The lack of imagination is a grievous blank in any character. Yet are there many people in England to-day who would think such a lack of no importance. Plenty of people, indeed, would go one step farther, and consider it perhaps the 'thing too much,' which was as well left out of the qualities which go to make up a personality. But then, these are the people who believe that a man can be sufficiently equipped to all intents and purposes without that power that transposes the commonplace into a higher key, and, reading between the lines in other people's lives, teaches sympathy.

Lack of imagination in a *nation*, however, is a deficiency of so vast an importance that, interfering as it does with its progress, it inevitably brings disaster. How could it be otherwise? For lack of imagination means missing the point when it is most imperative that it should have been grasped. It means want of intuition—that invaluable guide which steers straight, notwithstanding the absence, metaphysically speaking, of lighthouse or signpost. It means that what a man does not actually see for himself can never be grasped as a reality. That he cannot, in effect, put himself in

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another's place; see with his eyes, think with his thoughts, and live, in imagination, his life. That he cannot realise, in short, that other's way of life. And not to be able to realise, means also not to be able to sympathise, and with that last word the whole signification of lack of imagination becomes as clear as daylight. It stands revealed before us in its naked truth.

How vast a disaster lack of imagination is capable of bringing on a nation, is patent to us when we look at the mutiny of fifty years ago. For what was it that precipitated matters so much then? that stirred up the whole native mind against us? that made that revolt possible, in fact? What but that fatal lack of imagination which prevented our seeing, as a nation, that we were constantly sinning against the native point of view; constantly going counter to some deep-seated prejudice and religious conviction. Was it not that unrestrained invective against the Hindu and Mohammetan religion, in which a good many missionaries indulged, which roused to bitterness so many natives? They had apparently forgotten, in India, all about St. Paul's restraint in Ephesus in the matter of Diana, the great goddess of the Ephesians.

One of those Englishmen who, in 1857, was most conscious of our many 'false steps' in the

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conduct of our affairs with the native, was Martin Gubbins, of the Bengal Civil Service. It was he who was then financial Commissioner of Oudh, and who was, later on, at Benares, spoken of by Sir Evelyn Wood as 'the moving spirit of the station.' It was he who, working daily among the natives, knew them more thoroughly perhaps than any Englishman of his time, with the exception of Sir James Outram and Sir Henry Lawrence. Martin Gubbins makes a special point of the fact in his book, 'Mutinies in Oudh' (pub. 1858), that at the time of the outbreak of the mutiny, the bulk of the Europeans in India practically knew nothing of the native's social life: of his real self, his principles, aims and grievances. Gubbins, during the fourteen months which preceded the mutiny, was 'in daily intercourse with' the native. He was the intimate adviser of Sir Henry Lawrence, than whom no one understood the native character better. He says that Lawrence 'was essentially a friend of the natives. . . . He thought Europeans too apt to overvalue themselves and their own government, and to undervalue the native government of the country. He thought, too, that the people had just cause for complaint, and that affection is a feeling we have no right to challenge from our native subjects in India. . . . Aliens we are from them, in blood, in feeling, in religion; nowise mingling with them in social

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intercourse, and, interchanging few kindly offices, we have *no* right to expect from them love and sympathy, least of all assistance and support.'

As regards intercourse between the rulers and the ruled, we have not progressed far in the fifty years that have elapsed since the mutiny and the present day. English points of view have not, it would appear, shifted greatly. If we read the Indian press to-day we cannot fail to see that this is the case. I quote the following from a leading Madras journal, as regards *possibilities* of intercourse between the two races.

'Anyone who has lived in both hemispheres . . . cannot fail to have realised that, beneath the superficial differences which mark the two, runs a deep community of thought, of feeling. . . . In the face of the great problems of existence, man is the same whether his skin is black, brown, yellow or white; whether he is a native of ancient Athens, medieval Pekin, or modern London. This is the lesson taught by a real acquaintance with East and West.'

This is the possibility; let us look now at the actual fact of to-day.

'The majority of the young English people land on Indian soil with hazy notions of Indian life; and with a determination not to take any interest in it, merely because of prepossessions

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and prejudices. . . . They seldom, if ever, touch a book on Indian literature or religion. . . . They come out to this country steeped in the notion of the superiority of the West. . . . They never get a glimpse of an Indian home of respectability, they hardly ever mix socially with any Indian gentleman of position or worth.'

But at the time of the mutiny, Englishmen went farther than this. Beside their spirit of aloofness, were their ill-judged methods of officialdom. If the former hurt, the latter certainly incensed. It was these which fanned the flame of insubordination into the fierce fire of rebellion, and universal disaffection, throughout the length and breadth of India. It was this which helped to produce the mutiny. It was not the mere presentment of the idea of the greased cartridge alone.

The greased cartridge, which we are accustomed to give as, in effect, the shorthand *raison d'être* of the mutiny, was really, simply the last straw.

The whole trouble dated much farther back than that. It finished there, but the rubbing of the native the wrong way had been steadily going forward year in year out, and day in day out, unnoticed and unrecognised at its real value, because of this extraordinary lack of imagination of the Englishman.

The real wonder is not that the mutiny came

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when it did, but that it did not show itself before.[1] Sir Evelyn Wood, in his 'Revolt in Hindustan,' says: 'Men had many grievances; some dating from 1843. . . . An old native captain was often commanded by the last joined ensign from England, whose carelessness in returning salutes was a source of irritation. Our ignorance of native soldiers' feelings and inner life is shown by the wording of Lord Dalhousie's farewell minute: "Hardly any part of his" (the native soldier's) "condition is in need of improvement."'

It will be remembered that Lord Dalhousie's governor-generalship ended the year that preceded the mutiny. It was he who, just before he left for England, was actually unable to see the signs of disaffection which were in evidence throughout India, and foolish enough to disregard Sir John Low's grave warning. But there were other and worse grievances still. The unjustifiable annexation of Oudh was Lord Dalhousie's last great act of unwisdom. And it was a measure which certainly hastened on the mutiny.

For this annexation seemed to the native mind an act of treachery, done as it was during the time of peace. Nor was this a solitary instance. For there had been, from time to time, going on in

[1] Mr. Lecky said: 'If mutiny was ever justifiable, no stronger justification could be given than that of the Sepoy troops.'

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their midst, the annexing of small principalities, which from their point of view was quite indefensible and unjustifiable. It was carried out, too, as Sir Evelyn Wood says,[1] 'without regard to older forms of civilisation.'

It is true that benefit came to the Sepoys, or peasantry, at Oudh when the English Government appropriated the province, for they had for long been suffering grievously from the cruel exactions of the Talukdars, the hereditary revenue collectors of rent, who ground down the people for their own selfish purposes. It was well known that their own purses were filled, their own persons benefited, and that the oppressed peasantry could get little or no redress. Then, at length, the people revolted. Many of those who were dispossessed became robbers, and Martin Gubbins[2] tells us that 'there were hundreds of these when the English entered Oudh. Faces that had not been seen for years, and men at whose names the countryside trembled, were seen to enter the crowds where an English officer presided, and then became peaceful citizens.' Then the confiscated lands were restored to their rightful owners. But when Oudh became ours the difficulties with these Sepoys began. For justice had to be dealt

[1] *Revolt in Hindustan.*
[2] *Mutinies in Oudh.*

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impartially all round, and the Sepoy 'resented the loss of privilege.'[1] 'When Oudh became British there were not less than 60,000 discharged soldiery of the native government. Service was given to about 15,000 of them in our new local regiments.' But this did not provide for 20,000 others; and the nobility, who had been used to receiving large pensions from the native government, were reduced to great privations during the inevitable interval between the cessation of the latter and the establishment of British authority.

Here, then, were materials for discontent which were not slow to take formidable shape. Nor were the Brahmans and Mohammetans slow to stir the natives to boiling point.[2] For a long time there had been a great number of Brahmans in the native army; and this army, in 1857, was vastly larger than the English army in India.

But at the root of everything was the dread in the native mind that the destruction of the two things superlatively important to them, viz. their religion and caste, was being aimed at by the English Government. This fear was ever present with them; nor was it greatly to be wondered at. For, from sheer inability to comprehend what the effect of their conduct was

[1] Martin Gubbins, *Mutinies in Oudh.*

[2] Sir James Howard Thornton, *Memories of Seven Campaigns.*

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upon the natives, the larger number of those in authority rode roughshod over racial prejudices, over religious scruples, over age-long beliefs, without the slightest compunction or intuitive sympathy. To the majority of Englishmen the fact that the Hindus and Mohammetans believed that their future state could be affected by the use of cow's or pig's fat smeared on their cartridges, was merely in their eyes an absurd delusion, impossible to be taken seriously by the superior British mind. They had not the imagination to see how vital a point it was, any more than they could understand the native's point of view who would throw away his dinner rather than eat what had been defiled by the shadow of an alien and unbeliever. Martin Gubbins says: 'I conceive that the native mind had been gradually alarmed on the vital subjects of caste and religion, when the spark was applied of the threatened introduction of the greased cartridge.' He thought the Hindus had for some time been alarmed about caste and religion, and he traces it to the uneasiness in education which, in 1850, had been pushed forward so much. He tells us that so great was the impetus given to educational ideas by the Government about that time, that 'murderers and burglars who distinguished themselves as teachers were conveyed from one gaol to another to educate the rest.'

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The Brahmans, accustomed to having the conduct of native affairs, educational and otherwise, so largely in their own hands, naturally resented the people's education, for, as Gubbins says, they saw in it 'the certain downfall of their faith and their power. . . . It was whispered, and extensively believed, that the object of our government was to destroy the Hindu religion, and to convert them to our own.' Sir Evelyn Wood asserts the same thing when he says: 'The majority really believed that the government intended to abolish caste as a preliminary step to their forcible conversion to Christianity.' Martin Gubbins expressed his own strong condemnation of our way of educating the native youth, without at the same time giving them principles of strong morality with the actual education. He urged that our methods were only turning out superficially educated youths who had thrown up their old religion, but only to believe in themselves and their own superiority. Henry Carre Tucker, Commissioner of Benares, who distinguished himself in Upper India by his zealous educational measures, spoke strongly on this point in a letter from which I quote here.

'The *élèves* of our government are not well disposed towards us' (he was writing about the time of the mutiny). '. . . We have released them from their own religions without substituting a better.

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Most of them are consequently puffed up with knowledge, discontented with their position, and infidels at heart. . . . I am strongly in favour of government relinquishing its schools, and confining itself to grants in aid of all efficient schools, without reference to religion.'

There are those among us who prophesy another mutiny, and one, moreover, on a far larger scale than that of 1857. There are those who say it is impossible. These last say that, warned by experience, we could not again be surprised because of the far greater forces at our disposal in India. But, if our military force is larger, there is still one thing to be remembered. At the time of the first mutiny, education was young in India. The native has travelled far since then. He has learned many things in the last fifty years, and he will not forget them. Mr. Gokhale says: 'Half a century of Western education, and a century of common laws, common administration, common grievances, and common disabilities have not failed to produce their natural effect even in India. . . . It should really not be difficult for Englishmen to realise that you cannot have institutions like the universities working for more than half a century in India, and then expect to be able to govern the people as though they were still strangers to ideas

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of constitutional freedom or to the dignity of national aspirations.' He goes on to point out what must be the natural outcome of the education which we have ourselves given them. We have trained them in our own methods; what wonder is it that sooner or later they ask us to fulfil the conditions of the Charter Act of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858. No one can have forgotten these conditions; but, nevertheless, we act as if we had. For in their pages there occurs a sentence which it is exceedingly difficult for us to face now quite truthfully, a sentence, namely, which declared to the natives of India that the sole aim of British rule was the welfare of the Indian people, and that under that rule no distinction would be made between Indians and Europeans in the government of the country, on grounds of race, or creed, or colour.[1]

. . . . . .

Every revolution is the blackboard upon which shining deeds of valour, unselfishness, and resource show white. It is the strong Personality's opportunity. And the Indian Mutiny was no exception. The brave man felt it as a call to show

[1] Sir Henry Lawrence said, in 1856: 'The conditions of the Indian army denied a career to any soldier of genius, and this must put the best brains of the Sepoys in quarrel with the British rule.'

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his mettle; the unselfish man, as the occasion for supreme self-surrender; the man of resource, as his chance to make a possible future out of a black present.

The following is the story of how gallantly a small band of civilians held the fort in the teeth of what seemed like overwhelming odds, and held it until the relief, of which they had wellnigh given up all hope, at last came to them. For the defence of Arrah was the achievement of eight Englishmen, civilians every man of them. It was the triumph of personality against numbers. For outside Arrah house were more than two thousand besiegers, and these were all kept at bay by that indescribable but very real power. For Personality is like the vision of that armed force encamped round about Elisha on the day when his terrified servant recognised, as he had never done before, everything that unseen forces stood for, in the material things of the world; and how, face to face with spirit, matter steps back powerless. It was just this force which kept those two thousand enemies from making a charge for the house, when the little band of defenders must inevitably have perished.

Perhaps nothing could have shown this fact up more clearly than the story of Arrah itself. For why did the first attempt at relief of the garrison

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fail so ignominiously? Was it not because of the want of efficiency in its leader; because of his total lack of individual power and foresight and resource? What, on the other hand, made the second relief a success? Simply because Sir Vincent Eyre was a force in himself, a man of marked individuality and unbounded resource. The difficulties, the enemies, were the same on both occasions, but it was the *man* who was different, and this difference saved the situation.

Some people have thought that enough has been written about the mutiny. That we are tired of hearing about it. But enough can never be written of deeds of splendid daring and courage; of men undefeated, undismayed in the midst of the worst misfortunes, dangers and perils. It can never be in vain to try and do justice to feats of endurance and self-sacrifices, prompted by that inspired French motto: *Faites ce que tu dois, advienne que pourra.*

The deeds themselves are long past and over, but they live on for ever as incentives to men and women of to-day, and also for others in days that are coming. When the present grows monotonous, when the fixed star of every day's duties fails to lighten our spirits, when every day is so much like another that we feel our lives at a dead level, now and again the thought of some brilliant

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achievement done in the face of tremendous odds, gleams, like a rare comet, across our mind's sky, and we take heart again; we pluck up courage to face monotony; nay, more, we are *glad* to be living in a world where such splendid deeds have been done, in supreme moments of crisis.

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THE SIEGE OF ARRAH

No, let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute 's at end.—PROSPICE.

ARRAH, the defence of which in 1857 was, according to Martin Gubbins (who had the words straight from the lips of Sir Vincent Eyre at Lucknow), 'one of the most remarkable, miraculous feats in Indian history,' is in the district of Shahabad, near the rivers Ganges and Soane, and ten or twelve miles from the former.

It is the official capital of the district, and lies between Patna and Buxar. It is forty miles from the latter place, and about twenty-four from Dinapore, the military station. To reach Arrah from Dinapore one has, for some distance, to pass through thick groves of mango. In a small volume called 'Arrah in 1857,' edited by Major Leather of the 5th Fusiliers (and privately printed at Dover),[1] there

[1] To which I have most kindly been allowed access by Major Leather.

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is a paper by Mr. Halls (a civil surgeon, who was one of the garrison during the defence), in which is a description of the approach to the station: 'The old houses, with their quaintly carved balconies and balustrades, many of them in a very tottering condition, give a picturesque appearance to the scene. . . . After extending for about a mile the main street makes an abrupt turn to the left, and becomes widened into a broad straight road or market-place, flanked on either side by the houses of the Mahajuns (bankers), and . . . terminated at one extremity by the Judge's Compound, and on the other by the road leading to the jail. . . . A short distance beyond the market-place . . . the eye wanders over a large expanse of brilliant verdure to the pretty little English cemetery . . . while on either side the Government offices, the new Schoolhouse, and the European bungalows and gardens, give, with some fine large trees, importance and variety to the landscape. . . . Such was the aspect of Arrah at the commencement of the Sepoy mutiny in 1857; perhaps even now its appearance is comparatively unchanged. . . .'

In the early part of the year 1857 the usual kind of European officials to be found at any civil station in India, were to be found in Arrah. There were inspectors and railway engineers also, and, of course, there were the wives and families of the officials

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living there (as they thought) in security. For, though warnings had been issued from time to time by those who might have been trusted to know what they were talking about, in large measure their word was not taken; so, when in May the sudden open flare of the mutiny at Meerut struck terror into people's hearts, the panic of those who knew themselves to be unprepared, was great and universal.

At Arrah there was grave reason for fear. For there was a little band of English in the midst of a 'warlike native population.' There could not have been less than two or three hundred prisoners in the jail, and no one trusted the jail guard, which numbered 150 men. It was daily expected the three Sepoy regiments at Dinapore would mutiny. And besides all this, Koer Singh, the greatest landholder (or Zemindar) of the district, who was the most influential man in the neighbourhood among the native soldiers, was strongly suspected to be plotting against the English.

Koer Singh had some reason for his growing animosity. He had been originally very deeply in debt, and his estates were heavily mortgaged. In 1853 or 1854 the Bengal Government stepped in with the intention of saving him from ruin. They took over the management of his land, and saw to it that his creditors were being gradually paid out of the proceeds. He promised to borrow some

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rupees to assist in the paying off of his debts, but was unable to fulfil his promise in the short time allowed him. Just before the mutiny, the Government had settled to give up their unsatisfactory task of management, and later, a law suit went against him in the Sudder Courts, and he was left resourceless. But by this time the breath of the approaching mutiny was in the air, and Koer Singh, rendered desperate by his ill-fortune and his loss of influence, incited the Dinapore regiments to insurrection.

Apart from his debts and his insubordination to British rule, Koer Singh, so Mr. Halls tells us, was 'a fine, noble-looking old man. . . . His manners were at once dignified and courteous, and bore the stamp of real nobility. . . . He had been a great sportsman, and was much liked by the Europeans generally.'

As Sir George Trevelyan very tersely puts it, had Koer Singh been forty years younger—forty years old instead of eighty—the defence of Arrah would have ended very differently to what it did, and we may think ourselves very fortunate that old age had begun to slacken his martial powers and vigour of resource. Placed as they were in such very evident peril from the causes just mentioned, the Europeans at Arrah were daily on the *qui vive* for any news from Delhi, Dinapore, or Calcutta.

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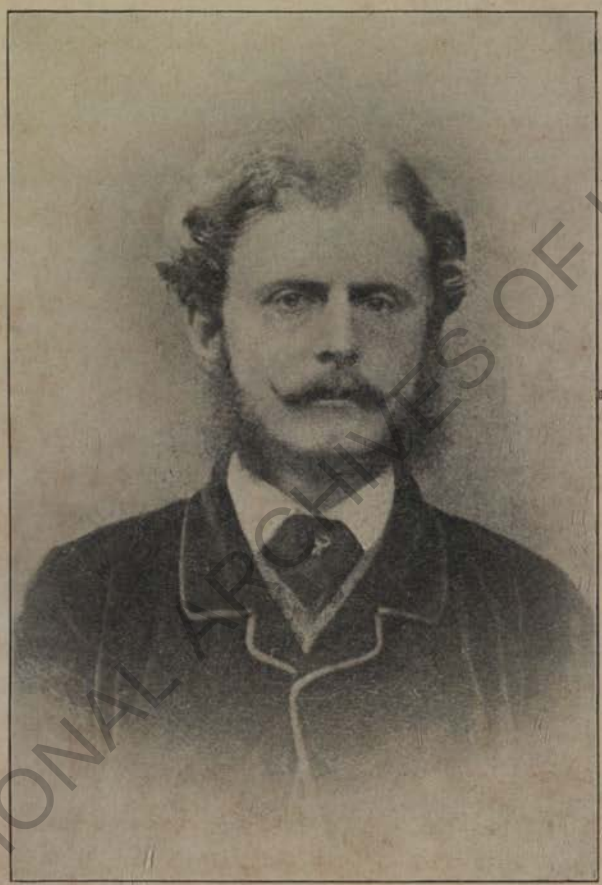

Mr. HERWALD WAKE.

(Taken just after the Mutiny).

By kind permission of Mr. Herwald Wake, his son.

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All through May no one knew where to expect the next outbreak. Then on June 8th the Commissioner of Patna[1] sent a letter which said that an insurrection of natives was expected to occur at Dinapore. Mr. W. Tayler also despatched to Arrah fifty of Major Rattray's Sikhs. In the diary[2] of Mr. Bax-Ironside, magistrate at Ghazipur, I find these entries: '*June* 3.—Mutinies at Benares, Janupoor, and Allahabad.

'*June* 7.—Panic in station of Ghazipur—groundless—however all the ladies and most of the gentlemen went on board a steamer lying off the shore. . . .

'*June* 13.—Went with 50 Sepoys and a few Sowars to restore order in the district . . . (it) had hitherto been in great disorder—gang robberies, murders, &c., very common.'

After the receipt of Mr. Tayler's letter of warning, most of the Europeans at Arrah spent the night at the Judge's (Mr. Littledale's) house. The next day a council was held at Mr. Wake's house,[3] and he decided, on his own responsibility, that all the women and children should be sent to Dinapore by way of the Ganges, Mr. Wake having provided ample boats for the purpose. This decision,

[1] Mr. Tayler was then Commissioner of Patna, with Mr. Ross Mangles (afterwards V.C.) as his assistant magistrate.

[2] Kindly lent me by his daughter.

[3] Mr. Wake was magistrate of Arrah.

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though very unpopular at the time, was acted upon on June 9th.[1] Then ensued another discussion, in which they were not all of one mind, as to the next proceedings to be taken. Some suggested the advisability of an amateur cavalry corps being made of those who remained at Arrah. But this was negatived, as some of the would-be cavalrymen were untrained in horsemanship and the use of the sword, and all the horses were eminently civilian and untrained for war.

Then Mr. Wake insisted that it was imperative that the houses should be examined with a view to finding out which would be best suited for fortification, as he felt very sure that it was their duty to remain and hold the station should rebellion break out, as they feared would be the case, in Arrah. When, however, he first stated his intention to remain, and asked who would stay and await the arrival of the mutineers, only one man offered, by name Cock,[2] and he proved later of great use, and distinguished himself in many ways. Mr. Halls says, in his 'Two Months in Arrah,' that 'all of the non-officials there present, with the exception of two . . . made the best of their way, some by boat, some on horseback, to Dinapore, carrying

[1] Mr. Halls and Mr. Boyle went with their wives to a place of safety, and then returned to serve in the defence of Arrah.

[2] He was a member of a family of old standing in Devonshire, whose pedigree dates back to 1620.

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with them a formidable battery of double-barrelled guns and revolvers, and leaving the party at Arrah[1] reduced to six or seven men.

It is not difficult to picture the feelings of these six or seven[1] men as they watched the crowd setting off for safety and Dinapore, and knew themselves left behind to an inevitable struggle against almost overwhelming odds. This dash for safety took place at other stations, too.[2] At moments, perhaps, they shared the same thoughts as had passed through the minds of that other dauntless six of many a century ago, who, to save their fellow-townsmen, had offered themselves and their lives to appease an English king, and had marched, unflinching, fearless of death, wearing the most honourable ornament that was ever fashioned—the noose of self-sacrifice for others. The men of Arrah, too, like the men of Calais, wore the rope of willing servitude in obedience to what they conceived as their duty to their country, and by their timely defence of the station saved the Empire at a most crucial moment, and prevented

[1] This number was augmented later, on the return of Boyle and Halls and Armstrong.

[2] In the *Daily News* of this year, 1857, Mr. Wells Butler told of his escape from Gya; and asked for a 'safer station.' He had no thought of the treasure the Commissioner had hoped he would bring in, but simply asked the public to sympathise with him 'at the loss of a snow-white Persian kitten, a superb creature, and his pet dove'!

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the mutiny from spreading farther. 'Without the defence of Arrah the road to Laknao and Lucknow would have been blocked, and the whole of Bengal would have joined the rebellion. What was done by this handful of Englishmen was done just at the right time and place. If they had run off, as they might have done . . . it is quite possible (so Havelock said, I believe) that the mutineers would have triumphed all along the line, and India would have no longer been under the British flag.'[1]

Mr. Wake requested Mr. Boyle (civil engineer, and one of the small band of men who remained at Arrah) to go with him and examine which house it would be wisest to fortify. Mr. Wake's choice fell on Boyle's bungalow. He did not, naturally, urge its being fortified at once, as there seemed no immediate danger of an attack. Indeed, for six weeks nothing happened, though suspense was a daily companion. The English party remained at the Judge's house—and their authority kept the town from anarchy—and kept watch over the jail and its disaffected guard, and ordinary daily business went forward as usual. Mr. Wake was careful to ensure communication between Arrah and Dinapore, and Arrah and Buxar, and to have an added force at night of native police, 'and a vigilant patrol of Europeans.'

[1] Sir Herewald Wake.

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Thus the six weeks of waiting for the expected mutineers went forward. On June 11th one of those staying at Littledale's house wrote:

'Here we are all right and very comfortable. Wake's arrangements are perfect. . . . Littledale is most kind and hospitable. We have horse patrols during the night. . . . The table in what was the billiard-room, bristles with weapons of all descriptions. . . .'

The next day fifty[1] Sikhs, who had been sent from Patna, arrived to 'escort thither treasure to the amount of five lacs of rupees.' A few days later news reached Arrah of the mutiny at Allahabad of the 6th Bengal Native Infantry; also that the Sepoys at Dinapore were expected to make insurrection on the 15th.

'We are therefore'—I quote again from a letter in 'Two Months in Arrah'—'keeping good watch, and obtain intelligence from all quarters, thanks to Wake, who is a most active and efficient soldier, and well fitted for the emergency. . . . There is no occasion for you to tell us to keep up our spirits, for there is no lack of them among our little party.'

On June 17th the fortifications of Mr. Boyle's bungalow were complete. These were engineered by Mr. Boyle himself, who, after Mr. Wake's

[1] Only fifty Sikhs were left at Arrah, after Wake's urgent appeal to Mr. Tayler.

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decision a week earlier, had, unknown to the rest, gone forward with the work, collected cartloads of bricks, and 'built up with them the verandah arches of a small two-storied building, originally destined for a billiard-room, and distant fifty yards from his own house.'

And here it is necessary to explain, that in 'Two Months in Arrah' there is a statement not altogether in agreement with the truth. It would appear from what is said there, with regard to the fortifying of the bungalow, that it was only Mr. Boyle who had the forethought and the resolution to act on the suggestion, that a house should be fortified in preparation for the arrival of the mutineers, and that he alone carried it into effect. Whereas the facts were these, as a letter (quoted later) from Mr. Wake himself plainly shows, and as one of the survivors of the defence has assured me. From this letter alone, however, we are very clearly given to understand that it was Mr. Wake's initial wish and suggestion that a place should be prepared for fortification, but that Mr. Boyle 'made it appear that he did it in spite' of the opinion of the rest, and that, indeed, he was 'laughed at for the very idea of a fortification'; and thus he puts aside the truth, that it was in consequence of Mr. Wake's original idea, and of his and Mr. Wake's consultation, that the idea of

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fortifying the bungalow was suggested to him.[1] Face to face with this knowledge, it is impossible to accept the statement made in Mr. Halls' account, that it was 'Mr. Boyle's enterprise and forethought' which 'proved of signal service to his companions . . . and secured the safety of them all.'

From time to time as the days dragged along, disquieting news came, first from one part of Oudh and then from another, of mutinies breaking out in all directions. Then, later, they heard of the massacre of Europeans at Cawnpore, and accounts grew daily more serious. The mutiny was drawing gradually nearer. Then one morning came an anonymous communication saying that Koer Singh was in conjunction with the Sepoys,[2] and that an insurrection would certainly occur on July 25th. Nine days later Mr. Littledale received the following significant letter from Dinapore from Major Lydiard: 'A revolt among the native

[1] Wake distinctly asserted that the choice of house should not rest solely in Boyle's hands. When the idea was first mooted, there were no Sikhs there, and defence of the house would have been impossible.

[2] Through the supineness of General Lloyd at Dinapore, 2300 Sepoys (three native regiments) crossed the Soane and put themselves under the command of Koer Singh at Arrah. Perhaps it is only fair to state here that General Lloyd was old, and really past work at this time. His position was a difficult one, as he had to consider the large adjoining city of Patna, with its most disaffected Mussulman population.

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troops at Dinapore is expected to occur this day (25th July). Stand prepared accordingly.'

Still Mr. Wake hoped that trouble at Arrah would be averted, as he had given orders that all the boats on the banks of the river Soane (which crossed the road leading from Dinapore to Arrah) should be destroyed. Unfortunately for Arrah, this order was never fulfilled, Mr. Palin the engineer having forgotten his promise; and on Sunday morning early (July 26th), news came by means of a native trooper, whom Mr. Wake had posted on the shores of the Soane, that the Sepoys were then crossing the river. About ten o'clock two railway inspectors came into the station at full gallop to tell the news that a large force of Sepoys had already crossed,[1] and were burning the railway works and surrounding houses, and that they themselves had only just escaped in time.

This was the signal for the magistrate and his party of Englishmen to take up their quarters in Boyle's fortified bungalow. That evening they proceeded to brick themselves up, and each man took turns of watching throughout the night. Happily a store of 'atta' (wheaten bread),[2] flour, rice, dhal, grain and biscuits had been laid in for provisions, with plenty of water and some wine

[1] *Two Months in Arrah.*

[2] 'Atta' is flour from which bread is made.

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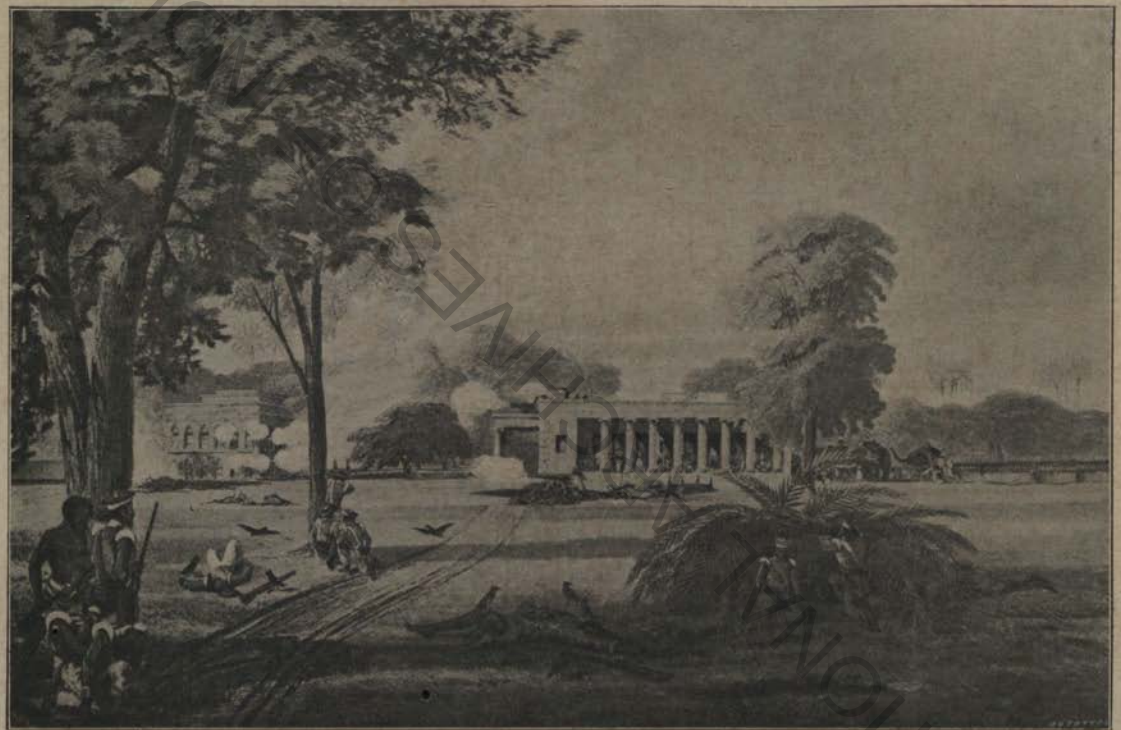

ATTACK ON ARRAH HOUSE, 1857.

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and brandy—all the food, in fact, which at such short notice could be collected, and all, indeed, that the garrison thought was needed, as it was confidently believed by them that the rebel Sepoy regiments would have been pursued at once by a British force, and that the siege would have been a question of only a day or so.

Thus the defence of Arrah began. A defence made by eight European civilians and fifty Sikhs of Rattray's Police Battalion, against more than two thousand Sepoys under Koer Singh's command.

At eight o'clock the attack began, the Sepoys having first gone to the jail, released all the prisoners, and looted the treasure, to the value of £8500. A charge was made on the bungalow from all sides, and it was very evident to the garrison that their enemies confidently expected to carry all before them. At fifty yards' distance, however, a sudden volley quickly put a stop to this idea, and laid many of them low. The rest promptly changed their tactics, and began hiding behind the trees in the compound, and taking refuge in the house sixty yards distant from the bungalow. 'They kept up an incessant and galling fire on us during the whole day.' [1]

[1] 'Account of Defence of Arrah House, 1857,' from H. C. Wake, Esq., Magistrate of Shahabad, to W. Tayler, Esq., Commissioner of the Patna division.

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And it was now that the true worth of the fifty Sikh police was shown, for the Sepoys repeatedly tried to persuade them to desert their post under the English, and offered them heavy bribes to do so. Every attempt to make them turn against the garrison, however, failed completely, and 'they treated every offer with derision, showing perfect obedience and discipline.'

In a letter written by one of the garrison a few weeks after the defence[1] there is a stirring account of the effect the Sepoys' first charge had upon the defenders: 'Their trumpets sounded a charge, and down they came at a double quick, shouting like demons, and firing as fast as they could. . . . The first rush of the vast force was certainly the most fearful; and judging of the feelings of others by my own, I suspect few of us had much hope beyond that of selling our lives as dearly as possible. Indeed, had the rebels had the pluck to advance, they might have kicked down our defences, or have scaled the walls and overwhelmed us by their weight of numbers.

. . . . . .

'Wake, the magistrate of Arrah, was, from the buoyancy of his spirits, the life and soul of our party, and a great favourite with the Sikhs.'

The rebels made an attempt later to smoke out

[1] *Two Months in Arrah.*

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the garrison, by bringing quantities of straw and bamboos, which they lighted, and into which they threw chillies (red peppers); but thanks to the kindly offices of the wind, which shifted at a crucial moment, the danger to the bungalow was averted. On the 28th the natives brought two small cannon (4-pounders) to play on the garrison. Mr. Wake's account says, 'these were daily shifted to what the rebels thought were our weakest spots,' but happily not one of the garrison got killed, though one of the Sikhs was hit by the ball from a musket glancing aside from one of the loopholes. This ball lodged in his head, 'fracturing the skull, and lodging on the brain,' and though he seemed to recover at the time, he died two months later at Dinapore. Soon it became evident that the mutineers had no gunner, and probably only 'country made powder,' for they did not fire more than once or twice in an hour, and then by far the greater number of balls flew far wide of their mark, for they went right over the house. Perhaps to call them 'balls' is rather a misnomer, as very often the cannons were loaded with castors, brass door-handles, as well as with hammered iron balls. The rebel gunners (for lack of a more suitable name) were able to fire under shelter, as they had made a very efficient barricade with Mr. Boyle's tables and chairs (which they found in his house),

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and of bricks and earth. One gun was about 60 yards away from the bungalow, and the other about 150 yards away. Mr. Halls says that the balls from this last scarcely ever hit the bungalow, 'but went over with a whizz and concussion that shook every part.'

'We were rather nervous at first lest they should bring the house down about our ears, but now we don't care much for them, only taking more precaution to put up more doors well covered with thick carpets against the windows.' [1]

Among many devices for the better placing of their cannon balls was the following. The largest gun was hoisted on to the roof of the house, loaded behind the parapet, and run into position. Then a man was wheeled out in an armchair 'fitted with screen of boards,' to train and fire the charge, and then gun and man were wheeled back behind barricade out of sight. When recharged, the gun was brought to the front again and fired in the same manner. But neither did this novel device succeed much better, though now and then a shot struck the walls, and once, at dinner-time, one of the piano-castors struck the seat of one of the garrison, who happened that morning, happily for him, to be late for dinner.[2]

[1] From a MS. account written shortly after the siege, by one of the garrison, to which I have kindly been allowed access.

[2] Mr. Halls, in *Two Months in Arrah*, says that 'if the fire

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On the 29th it was discovered that the rebels were beginning a mine, from under cover of the outhouses, which were quite near the bungalow. Promptly a counter-mine was dug by the garrison, which, when the siege was over, was discovered to have been directly beneath that of the Sepoys.

At half-past eleven that night, one of the Sikhs (who throughout the siege had shown the greatest faithfulness, courage, and resource) stole out quietly, and was able to find and bring in two of the mining tools: rough spades, *Kordalees*,[1] with which, as water was daily getting less and less, a well was dug inside the bungalow. Europeans and Sikhs lent a hand to the digging with such good will,[2] that in twelve hours they had struck water eighteen feet down, and soon had four feet of it for use. Finding the supply so good, the idea came to them that there was enough for outward as well as inward application, and Sikhs as well as Europeans were soon enjoying the—to them—rare luxury of a bath.

It was during the hours of this night that the incessant firing of musketry volleys and 'a continual dropping fire,' which seemed not far off the station, was heard by the defence party. One can imagine

from the cannon had been very serious, there would have been a sally to spike the guns, if possible.'

[1] A Kordalee is a native spade.

[2] The Sikhs had practically the larger share of the digging.

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what eager hope sprang up in the hearts of the besieged, for they made sure that this must be the relief expedition which they had been so confidently expecting. But alas, after listening to it for some time, it gradually grew fainter and fainter, as if it were going farther and farther away, until at length the sound ceased completely, and the grim fear took possession of them that the relief expedition must have been defeated.

Later on, one of the Sikh police contrived to elude the Sepoys and 'was drawn up by ropes' into the bungalow. He was able partly to raise the garrison's hopes, for he declared that the expedition had only been temporarily driven back, and would certainly return erelong. As events turned out, he was quite wrong, for the unlucky relief party to which he had belonged had been completely taken by surprise by the enemy when they were on the point of entering Arrah, owing to their commander's lack of foresight in not sending out scouts to reconnoitre; and, while great numbers were slain, the remainder, hopelessly disorganised, were in full retreat towards the river.

Happily for the men in the bungalow, however, this news did not reach them till later; neither were they aware of how completely their own case was considered as hopeless by the authorities at Patna and Dinapore. Indeed, it was believed that their

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destruction was only a question of time, and over in England their friends and relations had given them up as lost.

In the afternoon of July 30th, a sally was made into the small compound at the back, and four sheep were brought in 'which were most acceptable' (I quote from the MS. account from which I gave extracts before), 'as we had lived up to this time rather low: a biscuit or two, one handful of parched grain or peas for breakfast, with a cup of tea, and half-a-bottle of beer and a couple of chupatties, a kind of wheaten cake, not unlike a scone, for dinner.' With the sheep, were brought in two caged birds which had been without food for five days.

Outside in the compound three horses had been tethered. One had been shot by the Sepoys, and the two others by the garrison sentries, who had taken them, in the dark, for Sepoys. It will easily be understood what a grave danger these bodies, in their rapid decomposition, became to the garrison. One day, when for three hours the wind blew the stench straight across to the bungalow, there was a very serious dread of cholera, but happily for the inmates the wind shifted, and for the rest of the time set in the opposite direction, and their lives were saved.

Among those who suffered most perhaps in that week of suspense and dread for the besieged, and

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death to many of the besiegers, was a Sepoy who, having ventured too near to the bungalow, was wounded fatally by a well-aimed shot from one of the sharpshooters on the roof. For two days he lay in the compound, where he had fallen, none of his comrades being willing, apparently, to risk their lives by going to fetch him under shelter. He lay there helpless and suffering, with the dread certainty that nothing but death would come to set him free. And all through the hours of each day he could be seen with a feeble wave of his arm trying uselessly to scare off the kites and crows which would not be scared, but settled here and there on his body, not caring if he were alive or dead. It is difficult to imagine any more terrible fate than his.

On the night following, the mutineers twice tried to take the garrison by surprise, by the wild shout of 'Maro! Maro!'—'Kill! Kill!' but when they found the garrison on the alert, they did not follow it up by any assault: though had they had the courage to attempt it, there would have been no possible end but quick destruction for the defenders of the bungalow. Indeed, in the account of the defence sent by Mr. Wake to the Commissioner of Patna, he expressly states that 'nothing but cowardice, want of unanimity, and the ignorance of our enemies prevented our fortifications being brought down about our ears. During the

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entire siege, which lasted seven days, every possible stratagem was practised against us.' But curiously enough, considering their own enormous numbers and the smallness of those of the garrison, there was no assault made on the bungalow. Devices and stratagems without number, but no attempt to carry the fort by the sheer overpowering force of numbers. Nevertheless, the fear of this was before the eyes of the English every hour of the day and night. It must have seemed absolutely incomprehensible to them that such an attack failed of being made. But no, the rebels contented themselves with constant threats of annihilation, and the united attack which would have compassed this was never made.

On August 1st, they offered the garrison their lives and a free passage to Calcutta if they would at once give up their arms. When this proposal was rejected, cannonading began again, but not until half-past five in the afternoon, though occasional small-arm firing had been going on throughout the day. However, when night fell, the booming of the cannon kept on perpetually until daybreak. They had raised strong barricades on the roof of the big house, and from these they could see 'right into the upper verandahs,' and it had become exceedingly difficult for Mr. Wake's party to hinder their proceedings to much purpose,

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an occasional shot being all that was possible. But 'the outer breastwork was built higher, doors taken off their hinges, with mattresses used to block up the front windows,' and thus the bungalow was rendered more shot-proof.[1] The Judge was an unfailing shot, and was dreaded by the natives more than any of the others in consequence.

He had given additional encouragement to the Sikhs one day, by pointing to the little gold cannon he wore on his watch chain, and saying that that could do good service against the enemy! He constantly exposed himself unnecessarily in the sight of the Sepoys, and the others had often to entreat him to be more careful in letting himself be seen. Mr. Halls, in his 'Two Months in Arrah,' says 'the Judge was undoubtedly the superior officer, but as for six weeks previous to the siege the bulk of the labour, all the executive arrangements, the intelligence department, and the management of the Sikhs and the police, had by virtue of his office fallen to the share of the magistrate,' he did

[1] 'The mud from the well was used to strengthen the lower defences, and became a most efficient defence against the cannon: . . . Thousands of bullets and cartridges were also made.' I am told that the garrison had only such sporting powder and shot (made into bullets) as they already had in their houses, 'but with what we had, we certainly made up cartridges, keeping Government ammunition in case of a real attack' *(Two Months in Arrah).*

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not 'take the lead,' or 'interfere with Mr. Wake's measures.' Instead, he supported him and backed him up on every occasion, and 'set a good example to all the garrison; wherever hard work was to be done, wherever additional risk was to be incurred, there the Judge was among the foremost.' He is said to have been always a very retiring man, and never put himself forward in any way. Unless others had spoken of them, his splendid services done during the Arrah siege would never have been known to the world. After Littledale, Vicars Boyle and George Field were the best shots of the party, and were very soon recognised by their enemies as such, as was shown by their great care in not venturing near the bungalow, or showing themselves more than could be helped.

At last, when the garrison had almost despaired of rescue, they heard one night, from the shelter of the trees, a voice which said, 'Do not shoot. I have news for you.' Then, when the owner of the voice was begged to come nearer, they saw two men come forward who told them that the Sepoys had had a crushing defeat six miles off by Sir Vincent (then Major) Eyre.

Finding that this news was really true,—for a sally, made to catch some sheep in the compound,

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proved that the Sepoys had indeed left the neighbourhood,—their joy at the long-despaired deliverance was impossible to describe. Only those who have known the agony and strain of suspense can realise the joy when the certainty of release is unexpectedly at hand.

Examination proved that the Sepoy's mine had reached quite to the bungalow walls, 'and that powder and fuse were prepared,' so that the relief only came just in the nick of time. In a few hours the explosion must have taken place. The mine, of course, was destroyed by the garrison, and, their terrible week over, they waited and watched till about seven o'clock next morning they saw the advance-guard of Sir Vincent Eyre's force come riding up, 'waving their hats.' This was the signal for the cheers which enthusiastically burst from the little garrison in hearty welcome to their relievers.

The narrative of events which follows was written day by day on the wall of the bungalow by Mr. Wake with the stump of a pencil. I have been kindly allowed access to it by one of the survivors of the siege. After the failure of the first relief expedition, two of the garrison[1] 'expressed a wish that, in the event of their own destruction (then considered more than probable), some record

[1] *Two Months in Arrah.*

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should remain of the defence; and one of them suggested the above journal, adding his fears that the Sepoys would not suffer the inscription to remain. Mr. Wake, who was passing at the time, caught at the idea, and at once commenced the brief chronicle which we believe is still in existence on the dilapidated wall.'

But even when, six years afterwards, Sir G. O. Trevelyan visited Arrah, he found many things altered in the 'great little' house. 'Already,' he wrote, 'the wall on which Wake wrote the diary of the siege has been white-washed, and the enclosure, where the dead horses lay through those August days, has been destroyed, and a party wall has been built over the mouth of the well in the cellars, and the garden fence which served the mutineers as a first parallel has been moved twenty yards back. Half a century more, and every vestige of the struggle may have been swept away. But as long as Englishmen love to hear of fidelity and constancy and courage bearing up the day against frightful odds, there is no fear lest they forget the name of the little house at Arrah.'[1]

The following is Mr. Wake's diary, written 'with the stump of a pencil on the wall at any moment that could be spared in case we should be scragged.

HERWALD WAKE.

[1] Sir G. O. Trevelyan, *Interludes in Verse and Prose.*

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'We went into our fortified bungalow on the night of Sunday, the 26th of July, one jemadar,[1] two havildars, two naibs,[2] and 45 privates and Bhisti (water carrier), and cook of Captain Rattray's Sikh Police Battalion. Mr. Littledale, judge; Mr. Combe, officiating collector; Mr. Wake, officiating magistrate; Mr. Colvin, assistant; Dr. Halls, civil assistant surgeon; Mr. Field, sub-deputy opium agent; Mr. Anderson, his assistant; Mr. Boyle, district engineer to the railway company; Synd Azim Oudin Hoosein, deputy collector; Mr. Da Costa, moonsiff[3]; Mr. Godfrey, school (*sic*); Mr. Cock, officiating head clerk of the collectorate; Mr. Tait, secretary to Mr. Boyle. Messrs. Delparren and Hoyle, railway inspectors, and Mr. David Souza.

'The police abandoned the town on the Sunday, and as we were wholly unable to estimate the force coming against us, we thought it right to remain in the station, trusting to Dinapore for relief.

'*July* 27.—The insurgent Sepoys arrived this morning, and all attacked us in force. They were joined by the Najeebs (armed police force and jail guard), or some of them, and

[1] A 'jemadar' is a commissioned native officer of inferior rank.
[2] A 'naib' is a deputy.
[3] 'Moonsiff' is a native civil judge of the lowest grade.

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numbers of Kooer Singh's men. The Sepoys have repeatedly declared that they were acting under Kooer Singh's orders, and endeavoured to seduce to their side the Sikhs, who had hitherto behaved nobly, refusing to have anything to do with them and showing perfect obedience and discipline.

'9 A.M. *the same day.*—The Najeebs are firing on us with the rest.

'*July* 28.—Two small cannon are brought to play upon the bungalow; they load them with hammered iron balls, and brass door handles and such like, fired at us all day from behind the barricades, but could not get the range with the biggest, which seemed to carry heaviest metal. The little one has done us no serious damage hitherto, only one man (a Sikh) wounded, but severely—a ball in the head. The scoundrels skulked behind trees and wall and Boyle's house, which, unfortunately, is within eighty yards,[1] so we cannot tell how many are hit.

'*July* 29, 7 A.M.—This morning they are up to something new. Thousands are collected, probably the greater part villagers and disbanded Sepoys collected by Kooer Singh. 5 P.M.—No harm done; they can't touch the bungalow with the big gun. The skulks won't come within shot, though now and then one of them is knocked over by rifle

[1] Afterwards fifty proved correct distance.

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shots. 11.30 P.M.—Heard commencement of engagement between troops sent to our relief and the rebels.

'*July* 30.—About 5 A.M. one of the Sikhs sent to our relief came in and told us that only 300 Europeans and 90 Sikhs had been sent to our relief—God aid them!—Our well under the lower story is nearly finished. The relief has evidently had to retire, but we hear from the Sikhs that artillery is coming.

'There are four feet of water in the well! N.B. — The well is about eighteen feet deep and was dug within twelve hours. In the afternoon we made a rally into the compound, and brought in some sheep and two birds in cages that had had neither food nor water for five days.

'*July* 31.—They have got the largest of the guns close up to the house, and fire on us, protected by the garden wall (N.B. through a hole). Several of the balls, round and cast iron, have struck the lower story, but hitherto have done no serious damage. The balls are about four pounds; how they do so little damage we cannot imagine. We have reason to apprehend that the Sepoys are mining from the outhouses to the south. We have commenced a countermine.[1] The Sikhs are offered their lives and liberty if they hand

[1] The Sikhs were practically the chief workers at this.

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over the judge, magistrate and collector. The ladies and children!!! too, are not to be injured!!!

'*Saturday, August* 1.—No cannonade till 5.30 P.M. Occasional small arms firing all day. No one injured, except one Sikh had the wind knocked out of him by the bricks displaced by a cannon shot. Several rebels supposed to have been killed by long shots. They are raising strong barricades on the roof of the opposite house, from which they are likely to give us serious annoyance, as they can see right into the upper verandah. The shaft of the countermine has been sunk to the depth of about seven feet, and the gallery carried off towards the south and there stopped under the outer face of the wall. In the evening we were informed that it was the subhadars hooken!!! that all our lives were to be spared if we would give up our arms, and we should be sent to Calcutta. Firing from the big gun (which they had placed on the roof of the big house) kept up all night. Two alarms during the night, but finding us prepared on both occasions, no attack was made except with musketry.

'*Sunday, August* 2.—Gun fired three times between daybreak and 11 A.M. Little musketry; few rebels to be seen—gallery progressing.

'*Sunday, August* 2.—Major Eyre defeated the rebels; and on the 3rd we came out.

'*Vivat Regina!*'

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Another of the survivors of the defence has written to me that the garrison never anticipated being in the house 'more than 48 hours, as we had expected a rapid advance from Dinapore against the mutineer Sepoys; and this accounts in a great measure for the weakness of the defences; only one brick thick laid without mortar or mud, and just white-washed over to assimilate in colour with the rest of the building. The loopholes, too, were inverted. However, as no serious attack was made on the house itself, the defences answered their purpose; they were stronger, indeed, when we left than on going in, as the earth from the well and countermine had been piled up inside the bricks. . . . Of course, after the attempted relief we were in a very tight place, and with small chance of escape, never imagining help coming from the North.'

There is nothing in all the world which is more imperatively necessary than the presence of the man, or the woman, who can stand fire, if one may so express it, in a tremendous emergency.

Often their presence is missing. One has only to look at the history of the Indian Mutiny to see how in such case the vessel of England drifted on the rocks. Two examples flash up in

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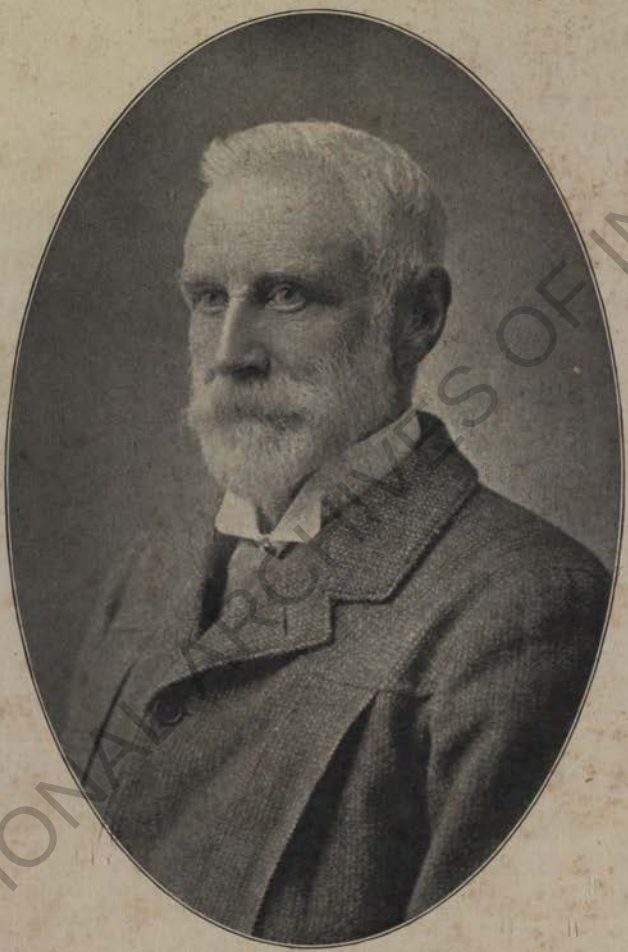

Mr. J. C. COLVIN.

One of the besieged at Arrah House.

Photo taken in 1902.

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one's memory in connexion with Arrah. The two examples of Meerut and of Dinapore are cases in point, where the culpable lack of initiative and promptitude on the part of those in authority, (who failed at the very moment when everything depended on them), ruined the chances of escape for all under their command. In an emergency personality steps to the front. Then, if never before, you see face to face the real man—the real woman; for something comes up from the depths of their real selves, and Intuition, which is the soul's grip of things, seizes the helm instinctively and fearlessly, and the vessel of Emergency is steered straight for port.

Herwald Wake was one of these men who could 'stand fire' in a tremendous emergency. He stood it at Arrah, when the management of an almost forlorn hope fell upon his shoulders, and he turned it into a splendid success.

Colvin was another (he had served as assistant magistrate under Wake for some time before the mutiny; and, living together, a strong friendship had sprung up between them); it was he, who, cheerful and hardworking throughout the siege, could joke over his cooking as the bullets were whistling on all sides of him.[1] Mr. Wake, in his

[1] 'There is much in common between Leonidas dressing his hair before he went forth to his last fight and Colvin laughing

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account of the defence sent to the Commissioner of Patna, wrote: 'Mr. Colvin rendered the most valuable assistance, and rested neither night nor day, and took on himself far more than his share of disagreeable duty.'

Such another splendid emergency-man was Sir Vincent Eyre, who, entirely on his own initiative, went to the relief of Arrah. Such another was William Tayler, Commissioner of Patna, who, by his readiness of resource and foresight, kept the province of Behar quiet and orderly when rebellions were seething in every direction. Such another was Mr. Martin Gubbins, judge at Benares, of whom Colonel Malleson writes,[1] 'but for him there would have been no ruling mind to guide the crisis.'

Many other names throng into one's mind, of men to whom Emergency came as a friend, for it came as the gate flung wide into Opportunity—the opportunity for deeds of honour, of self-sacrifice, and of valour for the sake of their country and their fellow-men—deeds which shine on for ever, from generation to generation.

over his rice and salt, while the bullets pattered on the wall like hail.'—Sir G. O. Trevelyan.

[1] *History of the Indian Mutiny*, by Sir John Kaye and Colonel Malleson.

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THE RELIEF THAT FAILED

Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blunder'd :
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die . . .
Charge of the Light Brigade.

Did we think victory great ?
So it is. But now it seems to me when it cannot be helped, that defeat is great,
And that death and dismay are great.

On July 25th a note was sent at midnight to Chuprah saying that the native troops at Dinapore were not to be relied on, but that the regiment of the 10th Foot and the guns were prepared, should any revolt take place. Dinapore was the only station between Calcutta and Benares, which had a force of British troops. The regiments there were the 10th Foot and other troops, and a battery of the East India Co.'s artillery. But two companies of the former were away on duty at some other place.

Then came the revolt of the three Sepoy regiments, as every one had expected but the incapable,

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vacillating General then in command there. He had been given power to disarm these regiments, but, though he was fully aware that mutinies were rampant in the north, he was most unwilling to do this. He, like many others, insisted that the regiments they had commanded so long could not harbour thoughts of treachery towards them, and so this culpable lack of foresight and ability to read the signs of the times resulted, in many cases, in terrible disaster.

When the mutiny broke out at Dinapore, Major-General Lloyd was on board a steamer;[1] consequently there was no one in authority to whom to refer. 'No one knew who was in command of the Europeans, no one knew whom to look to for orders, the General was not to be found.' He had, it is true, ordered that should his presence be needed, two shots were to be fired from the shore; but, nevertheless, the fact remains that when the 'assembly' was sounded, he was not among the troops, and there was no one in command at all.[2]

Afterwards he said that he had given authority to one of his colonels to act in his place, but at any rate he was himself responsible for what happened. The three Sepoy regiments got away

[1] *History of the Indian Mutiny*, by Sir John Kaye and Colonel Malleson.

[2] Lloyd ought most assuredly to have disarmed the Sepoys. He trusted them, as did so many better men.

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in safety with their arms and ammunition, and proceeded in the direction of Arrah. Even then, had the General not been so hopelessly incapable, they might have been pursued by the artillery at Dinapore, and this he was strongly advised to do, but he obstinately refused, saying he needed all the Europeans at the station.

Two days later news came that these three disaffected regiments had attacked the English stationed at Arrah. Most people regarded the case of these last as almost desperate: indeed, their position was regarded as hopeless. Even now the General seems to have had no idea that it was his duty to send a relief party to save these officials. It was not until influence had been brought to bear on him by Mr. Tayler, Commissioner of Patna, that he agreed to send help. At first he refused, apparently from some selfish reason of wishing to keep all the troops at Dinapore for the protection of himself and the residents. But later he consented, and sent 200 men of the 37th Queen's and 50 Sikhs. The next day news came that the steamer in which they had been despatched had gone aground on a sandbank. Mr. McDonell, magistrate of Chuprah district, in his letter to the *Times* of November 1857, says that it was believed at the time that this misfortune was caused by native treachery. The General, whose every move

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at this time seemed weak, foolish, and vacillating, hearing of this, sent to recall the troops. But this move could not be suffered by his subordinates. Mr. Ross Mangles was then assistant magistrate at Patna, and in a letter (to which his wife has most kindly allowed me access) he says: 'Of course, as Englishmen, we were in a great rage at this—leaving a number of poor fellows to their fate; so off——and I started at twelve o'clock at night on Tuesday last to pitch into the old muff. When we got to Dinapore we found that he had been made to change his mind, and had consented to send another steamer off, which luckily happened just to have come in.'

This happened to be a second steamer which had just arrived with fugitives on board from different places, so a force, consisting of nearly all the 10th Foot, and some of the 37th and Sikh regiments, started under command of Lieut.-Colonel Fenwick. And now occurred another hitch, at which General Lloyd again showed his incompetence. The passengers declined to leave the steamer, declaring that it belonged to a private company, and was not under the jurisdiction of the Government at all. I quote again from Mr. McDonell's letter before mentioned to show what ensued. He says that Mr. Tayler drove him and Mr. Ross Mangles to see the General,

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Mr. McDonell having gone hurriedly the previous evening, at about ten o'clock, in a native cart to Patna to see Mr. Tayler as regards the importance of relief being sent to Arrah at once.

'We woke up the General, and he told Tayler' (who had rather demurred to the suggestion that Mr. McDonell should go in the relief expedition), 'that it was very important that I should go, as I knew the road and he could trust to me. By this time it was the hour fixed to start. We drove down to the steamer, and to my disgust found all the passengers still on board. There was great delay and squabbling, and at five A.M. the General said, "Oh, if there is not room in the steamer, never mind; the flat takes only 150 men."

'So all the others went back. This caused endless confusion. Colonel Fenwick would not go with only 150 of his men; he ordered Captain Dunbar to take the command. At last we got off and came up to the other steamer, got her "flat" containing 200 of the 37th and 50 Sikhs, steamed on and landed at Berara Ghât about two P.M.' Captain Dunbar was in command of the relief expedition, among whom were Mr. Fraser McDonell and Mr. Ross Mangles; and Captain Ingleby led the 10th, the detachments of the 37th, and the Sikhs.

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In connexion with the 10th, another fatal mistake was made. Enfield rifles and ammunition were served out to the men, instead of the muskets they had always used hitherto. This was most unfortunate, as they were unacquainted with the use of them, and later on, when in action, most of the weapons burst in the men's hands. The force disembarked on an island, about two miles in breadth, which in summer is surrounded by a branch of the Ganges, through which a dangerously strong current flows. Here a halt was made for rations to be served out to the men, as they had had no food since the day before at Dinapore. While this was being done, so as to lose no time, Captain Ingleby and Mr. McDonell and two or three others offered to go, with a small number of Sikhs, and secure the boats which were needed to take the army across to the mainland. The mainland was known to be occupied by the enemy. What followed had better be told in Mr. McDonell's own words: 'On reaching the river's bank we found all the boats drawn up on the other side, and about 200 men assembled. They had four or five of those long native guns stuck on three sticks, and began blazing at us, whereupon two of our party said they would return for aid.'

'As it happened, however, it proved that these two volunteers were actuated far more by their

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own sheer cowardice, and desire to escape close quarters with the enemy by rejoining the steamer, than by their ostensible desire to obtain aid for their comrades.

Captain Ingleby had no desire to keep them with him, so they were allowed to go, first being specially enjoined not to inform the main body of troops that he had encountered the rebels, as he knew well that the soldiers sorely needed a meal before going to battle. No sooner had these two timorous volunteers started, than a regular panic seems to have seized them. Directly they arrived within sight of the main body of troops, they began running towards them at full speed, firing their guns in the air as they ran. They said they had come back with the news that Captain Ingleby's party were completely surrounded, and at the mercy of the rebels; that unless help were sent at once they must all be cut to pieces, and adding that they had been expressly sent to beg for a reinforcement.

Of course, hearing this, Captain Dunbar ordered the troops to get under arms at once and proceed to the help of their comrades. None of the men had had time to eat any food or drink a 'drop of grog,' and in the hurry of the moment it was settled that the rations should follow later. When they arrived at the river's edge, Captain Dunbar

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found he had been completely misinformed, for Captain Ingleby's party had already driven off the enemy and taken possession of the boats on the opposite bank.

Captain Dunbar, however, resolved now to go forward, it being now about four o'clock. By the time the whole army had crossed the 'nullah' it was nearly seven o'clock. The sound of the firing of big guns in the direction of Arrah, as well as information given by some villagers that Mr. Wake was still holding out, decided Captain Dunbar on going forward without any further delay. He had hoped that by this time the commissariat would have arrived, but as it had not, he thought it wise to push on without it.

It was a beautiful moonlight night by this time, but the first part of the march was very trying to the men, for they had to go along a sort of track covered with wet, sticky mud, with wooded country on each side. At the end of four miles, the going being very fatiguing to men who were getting very footsore and weary, a halt was made at about eight o'clock at the Kaimnugger bridge.[1] None of the enemy had been seen while on the march, although the troops passed through several villages.

[1] Captain Dunbar was certainly wrong in not remaining the night on the bridge when urged to do so.

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At the bridge the men were allowed to rest for a short time, and as they were dead tired, having had hardly any sleep the night before, many of them lay down on the wet ground and went fast asleep.

After waiting an hour to see if the provisions would arrive, Captain Dunbar, in spite of the protest of the other officers, who warned him of the extreme danger of going on at night, in a strange country, with an army practically dead beat from want of sleep and food, persisted in ordering the troops to march. The road was better by this time, but it was pitch dark, as the moon had almost set; and now Captain Dunbar committed another mistake. He had previously sent out skirmishers in front of the army, but now this most necessary precaution was neglected. They all marched in one compact body steadily forward.

From time to time the enemy's videttes were seen, but these immediately galloped off towards Arrah as soon as they were caught sight of.

In Mr. Kelly's account of this expedition[1] there is this account of the sort of terrible foreboding which now seized on every man as the force went forward 'in solemn silence.' He says: 'A feeling of something dreadful about to happen

[1] *Arrah in 1857.* Edited by Major Leather, 5th Fusiliers.

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seems to have been experienced by every individual member of the force; yet on they marched, meeting some half-dozen men of the enemy's videttes, who invariably galloped off at their approach.'

By this time they had reached to within a mile of Arrah, and were passing a 'thick black mango grove' with high banks on either side, behind the shelter of which the Sepoys fired, through which the moonlight showed dimly, when suddenly, without any warning, the whole wood was lit up by a glare as of vivid lightning, and volley upon volley of musketry was fired into their ranks at almost thirty or forty yards' distance (according to Mr. Ross Mangles' account). This played terrible havoc among the men, and a great many were killed at the first volley. By the light of the musketry they saw that they were surrounded by a force of about 2000 or 3000 Sepoys, whose fire was so close and so deadly that it was impossible for the 10th to stand against it. Indeed, nothing worse could have happened to them. Tired out and footsore, they found themselves in an ambush surrounded by enemies, not knowing where to turn in the thick blackness of the night—a blackness which was only broken by the ghastly fire of their enemy, a fire which only lighted many of them at the

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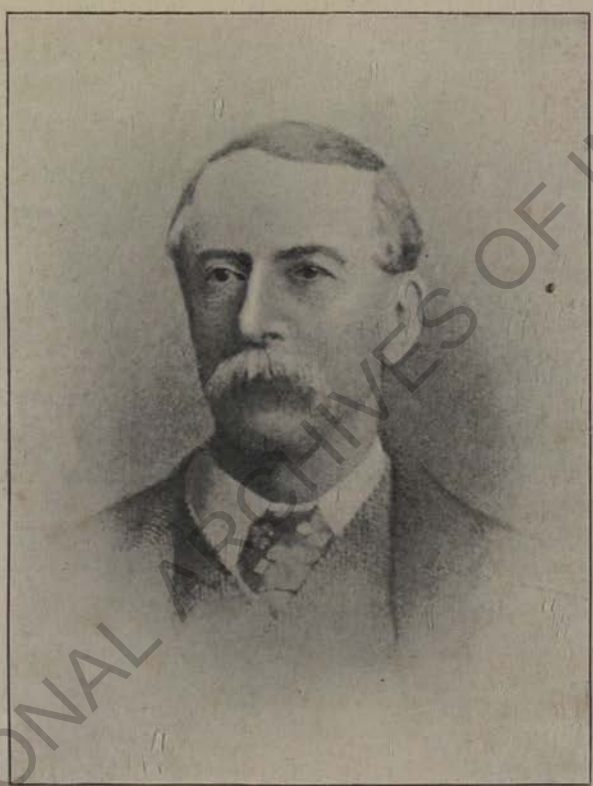

Mr. ROSS MANGLES, V.C.,
of the Indian Civil Service.

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moment of death. In the panic which followed the troops got completely disorganised. Captain Dunbar was among the first to fall, mortally wounded. Mr. McDonell relates that he fell against him, and that he himself was covered with his blood. 'A ball hit me in the thigh, cutting it slightly only. . . . I then shouted out that Dunbar was killed; that the first officer in command had best give orders. This brought another volley on us. . . . We then tried to join the main body and ran from tree to tree; the Europeans seeing us coming, all Sikhs nearly, thought we were the enemy, and fired into us, killing several; in fact, I fear as many of our men were killed by their own comrades as by the enemy. In the night it was difficult to tell friend from foe; and after having to dodge round a tree, you, in the dark, could hardly tell where your friends were, and where your foes. At last most of us got together and beat a retreat towards a tank, near which was a high bank, and lay there all night, the enemy firing into us every five minutes, and foolishly our men *would* return the shot. It was bad policy, it showed where we were, and we could not afford to throw away a single shot. . . .'

In this tank Mr. Ross Mangles helped the doctor to bind up the wounded men, though bullets were whistling over their heads all the

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time, for the English were all dressed in white, while the natives were practically nude except for loin-cloths. He says in his letter: 'I shall never forget that night as long as I live. We held a consultation, and determined to retreat, as the enemy was at least 3000 or 4000 strong, and had, besides, several cannon.'

In the dawn it was found (I quote from Mr. McDonell's letter), that there were still 350 men of the force remaining. The enemy could be seen now clearly; the three native Dinapore regiments being drawn up in order. 'About 2000 men with long matchlocks, belonging to, and headed by, Baboo Koer Singh, and more than 1000 of the disbanded Sepoys who had managed to join him, and a large rabble armed with swords, spears, &c., not formidable in themselves, but who made themselves useful killing all the wounded, beating them like dogs. We tried to make the men charge, but they were tired, wet, and a great number wounded. My leg, from lying on the damp ground and from the bleeding, was so stiff I could hardly walk; however, I soon warmed up. . . . There were no Dhoolies, so that the wounded had to march with the rest.'

Now began the disastrous retreat, which was to last for sixteen miles until the troops should reach the river, and the boats.

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Sir Evelyn Wood, in his 'Revolt in Hindustan,' says the 'discipline and courage of the Sikhs was unfailing in this retreat; they never lost formation, and never hurried the pace,' but the rest of the troops, soon after starting, in spite of all the efforts of their officers, got hopelessly disorganised. The regiments became mixed, and the gallant 10th, who had never known before what it meant to retreat from an enemy, lost all order and all hope, and soon the army became a rout of flying fugitives. It was in vain they endeavoured to get out of their enemies' reach. Their enemies were everywhere—in front of them, behind them, beside them. Three cannons kept up an unceasing roar, and volleys of musketry decimated the panic-stricken regiments. Not content with firing from every bush and shelter along the road, numbers of Sepoys hurried on, and could be seen waiting for them on the road along which they were obliged to travel in order to reach the only possible place of safety of which they knew—the river. It was in very truth a march of Death, and Despair. There was nothing to be done but to go on, even though it meant going through the midst of a burning, fiery furnace; for to wait, or to stay behind their comrades, meant, besides the equal certainty of death, possible torture before death as well. Now and again, when the enemy drew nearer to them,

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the men would make a sudden bayonet rush, and clear a way through a mass of foes and scatter them right and left.

Mr. Kelly mentions in his account[1] that the Sikhs were invaluable on this terrible retreat. They helped carry the wounded, saved lives, and encouraged the despairing. One of them succeeded in persuading a young English officer to persevere who, almost exhausted from his efforts, was just going to sit down and give himself up for lost, by saying, 'Cheer up, you 'll live to see it through; hold on while you can, and rely on it you 'll never be taken alive, for, the moment I see you have given in, *I'll knock your brains out on the spot.*' His words proved quite successful, for the young man, thinking the Sikh was just about to execute his threat, jumped up promptly, and was helped on again by his attendant, who eventually managed to get him to a place of safety.

Perhaps there has never been a more disastrous march than this retreat of sixteen miles through the unceasing fire of thousands of muskets. Mr. Ross Mangles gives a very graphic description of what it all meant to those who took part in it.

'The whole distance, sixteen miles, we walked under a tremendous fire. The ditches, the jungles, the houses, and, in fact, every place of cover along

[1] *Arrah in 1857.*

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the road was lined with Sepoys. We kept up a fire as we went along, but what could we do? we could see no enemy, only puffs of smoke. We tried to charge, but there was nobody to charge; on all sides they fired into us, and were scattered all over the country in groups of tens and twenties. Dozens of poor fellows were knocked over within a yard of me on my right and left, but, thank God, I escaped in the most wonderful way. The last five miles of the road I carried a poor wounded fellow, who begged me not to leave him; and though we had had nothing to eat for more than twenty-four hours, and I had had no sleep for two nights, I never felt so strong in my life, and I stepped out with the man as if he had been a feather, though he was as big as myself. Poor fellow! the men, most of them wounded, were leaving him behind, and the cowardly Sepoys, who never came within 200 yards of us, were running up to murder him. I got the poor fellow safe over the Nullah. I swam out and got a boat, put him in, and went over with a lot of others. The poor fellow thanked me with tears in his eyes.' It was this splendid act of unselfishness and determined bravery, which won for Mr. Ross Mangles the well-deserved 'V.C.' He makes very light of what he did in the foregoing letter; but in reality one cannot realise what it must

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have meant to him to carry on his back for five miles of broiling heat, and under incessant fire, this poor wounded man, keeping back as best he could with his rifle, the enemy who pressed close on him.

Into the day of common things, into the life of dull, uninspiring duties, such an act as this brings that thrill of enthusiasm which an appeal to the absent Ideal in the midst of the very present commonplace will always bring: and 'our souls in glad surprise' are lifted higher.

For when others were only struggling to save their own lives in their frantic efforts to escape from that horrible 'Valley of Death' to the distant river where lay their only chance of safety, he had been forgetting himself in his pity and sympathy for the sake of one of the troops who fell, wounded, at his side. In such a despairing retreat as this many must have dropped every two or three minutes, but those many had in most instances been left where they fell, and their fate had been sometimes torture, always death. But Mr. Ross Mangles was willing, at that supreme moment, to minimise his own chances of escape for the sake of another; and to do it, moreover, unnoticed by others. Indeed, no one would have known of it at all had it not been that the man he saved, after a twelve months' search, was able to find out the name of his benefactor, and thus his deed of valour

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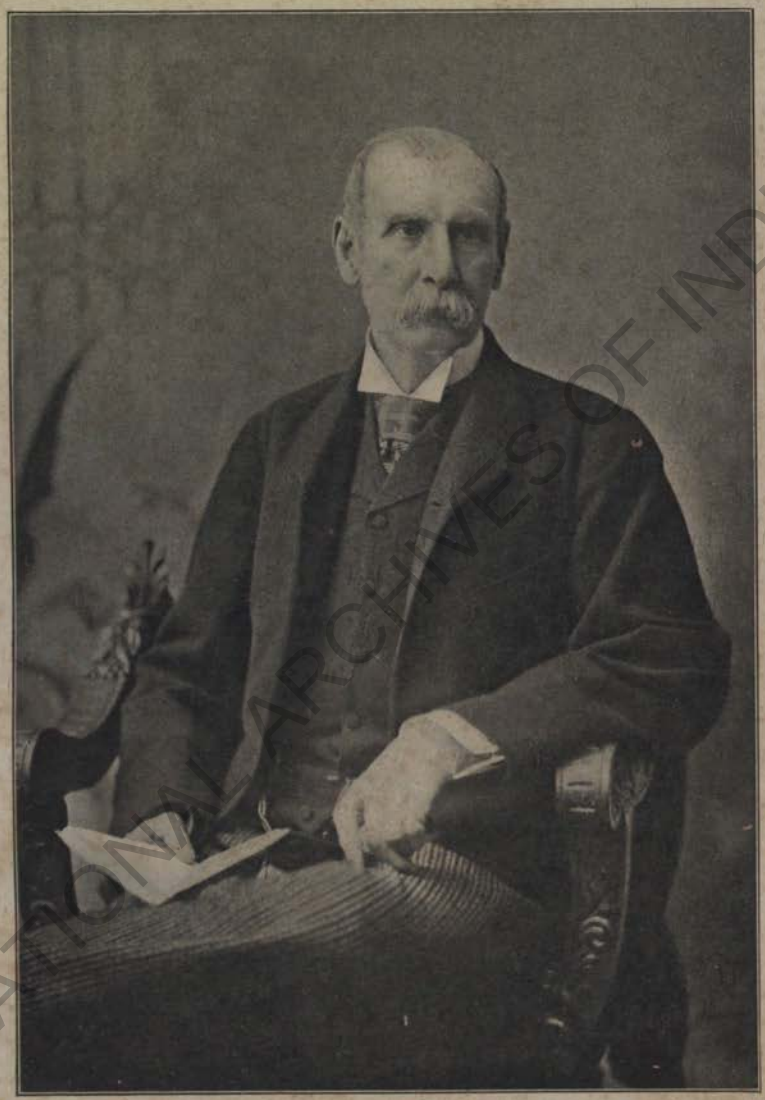

Mr. McDONELL, V.C., of the Indian Civil Service.

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became known to the authorities. One of the officers of the 37th was badly wounded during the march to the river, and was helped forward by two of his men, who, wounded themselves, could hardly walk. They had not gone far when he suddenly received five other shots and both his ankles were broken. This made his escape impossible, for his companions could not carry him, and they were forced to leave him behind. Then, knowing the tortures that awaited him if, alive, he should fall into the hands of the enemy, he shot himself with his own revolver. And would there be any who would deny the justifiableness of the deed, done with such a motive in such a terrible predicament?

At last the river came in view, and surely never was the sight of promised land more passionately welcomed than was the gleam of its waters on the eyes of the weary, harassed fugitives. In Mr. McDonell's letter there is a very graphic account of this part of the retreat, in which occurred his own daring feat of cutting the rope which held back the boat, in the bottom of which quantities of the troops crouched under shelter, in the face of heavy fire. Here, again, a 'V.C.' was earned. Mr. McDonell, by one of those fine, splendid impulses which show up unfailingly the really great nature among a crowd of ordinary

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ones which are swayed by purely personal considerations, finding that the rope had got hitched round the rudder of the country-built boat in which they had taken refuge, and that it was fastened to the shore, gallantly climbed on to the high stern (the rest of the boat was covered in), and 'amidst a hail of bullets' unfastened it and allowed it to drift out to the middle of the river.

This is Mr. McDonell's own account:—

'By the time we reached the boats 100 (men) must have been killed, and then commenced the massacre. The boats which we expected to have been taken away were all there, so with a cheer we all rushed to them, when, to our dismay, we found they had fastened them securely to the shore, and had dragged them up out of the water, and had placed about 300 yards off a small cannon, with which they blazed into us. . . . The men, to escape the shot, got into the boats, and, of course, as long as they were in them it was impossible to push the boats off. So a number of men stripped themselves, throwing away their rifles and everything, and some of them managed to reach the other side. The wounded men, of course, could not swim, and some of us knew we could never reach the shore, so out we jumped and managed to get two of the boats off; well,

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then we were at the mercy of the wind and stream, for not an oar had they left us. The wind was favourable, and we started off splendidly, when, lo and behold, we gradually turned towards the shore, and then I saw they had tied our rudder, so as to bring us in again. I told the men to cut it, but no one moved, and so I got a knife and climbed up to the rudder. It was one of those country boats, covered in except just at the stern. The moment they saw what I was at they blazed at me, but God in His mercy preserved me. Two bullets went through my hat, but I was not touched. The rope was cut, and we were saved; but about half-way across we struck on a sandbank, and then every one jumped overboard. One young officer jumped over as he was, with his sword on, and down he went; another, Ingleby,[1] was shot in the head, and either drowned or killed. I threw my pistol overboard; my coat I had thrown away early in the morning, as, being a coloured one, it made me conspicuous among the soldiers, who were all in white. How I swam on shore I know not, as it is not an accomplishment I am a "dab" at. When once on shore we were pretty safe, and 250 out of 450 reached the steamer alive.

[1] Captain Ingleby, it will be remembered, had been in command of the 10th Foot.

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Since then nearly 100 more, from wounds, exposure, &c., have died, making a loss of 300 out of 450—the worst that has befallen us yet, and nearly everyone was wounded. Of the volunteers who went with the troops, eight were killed, two wounded, poor Garston badly, shot right through the body from hip to hip, myself slightly in two places. . . . . The eighth volunteer, young Mangles,[1] . . . was knocked on the head and stunned for some ten minutes. . . .'

Mr. Ross Mangles gives a slightly different statement of the numbers of the force and its losses :—

'I never before knew the horrors of war. . . . I am sure God spared me because He knew I was not fit to die; and I pray God that He will prepare me. . . . I had several extraordinary escapes—one bullet went between my legs as I was walking, and broke a man's leg in front of me; another bullet hit me on the back of the head, knocking me down, but hardly breaking the skin. . . . Out of the 400 fine fellows that started for Arrah nearly 200 were killed, and of the remainder I do not think more than 50 to 80 were not wounded. Out of seven volunteers five were knocked over, four killed and one

[1] Who had joined the expedition because of his friendship for Mr. Herwald Wake.

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wounded. This has been the most disastrous affair that has happened out here. I hope, however, we may soon get some more troops again from Calcutta, and get back our name. I cry to think of the way we were beaten, and of the number of poor fellows who were killed. . . . The crack on my head hardly broke the skin, and is nothing; the bullet hit me sideways, and the folds of cloth I had round my hat saved me. . . . The authentic return I have just seen—150 men killed, the rest wounded, except about 50 men who got off untouched. I suppose such a disastrous affair was never heard of before in India —most dreadful mismanagement throughout. Of course we did not relieve poor Wake and his garrison. . . . We have at Dinapore only 600 Europeans, and of course cannot send any of them. We want a good general here. I think if we had a good head, things might yet turn out well; at present they certainly are not bright.'

In the book entitled 'Arrah in 1857,' the estimate of troops who started on this expedition is given as 550, and those who never returned are quoted as 300.

Mr. Kelly tells us there, that men who had never swum before in their lives, on this occasion were driven to such extremity that they managed to get across a river 250 yards wide, and one

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in which, moreover, there was a swift and dangerous current. He gives the case of two young officers who had started to cross the river in one of the oarless boats, but who were forced eventually to trust themselves to the river only. One of them was shot in the leg while in the boat, and he 'took to the water as his only chance'; and though he sank six or seven times, during the time of his unconsciousness he must have, unconsciously, made efforts at swimming, for when he came to himself he found he was lying on the shore of the opposite bank.

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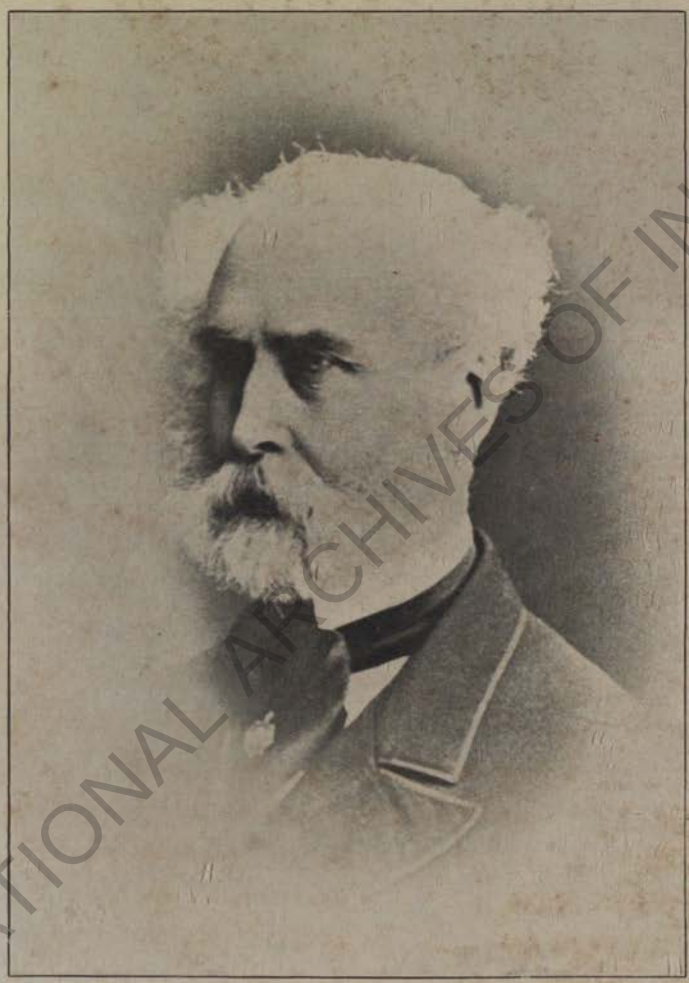

SIR VINCENT EYRE.

By kind permission of his son.

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THE RELIEF THAT SUCCEEDED

WHEN the clash of tremendous forces has brought to the birth a crucial moment, a decision has now and again to be made upon which hinges the fate of multitudes.

Sometimes that crucial moment roughly pushes aside, in the stress of circumstances that seethe around it, all preconceived ideas of what should rule conduct, of what should guide action. Sometimes, indeed, it reverses the rule of life so completely, that what was right yesterday becomes wrong to-day; that although a man's honour is concerned in his strict obedience to his superior officer, yet a day may dawn, an occasion happen, when, to save others, God's own foresight falls upon him, so that he has to disobey earthly orders in order to obey those which intuitively he recognises as being from the Most Supreme Authority of all.

These occasions are seldom; but they do occur, and *something*—we have no name to call it by—supersedes all recognised normal conditions of right and wrong as generally understood.

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Where should we have been but for Nelson's blind eye? We have, in fact, to face this contradiction in terms: obedience to a superior authority is an absolutely necessary item in every soldier's education; yet there *are* rare occasions, as I said, when God's gift of foresight, bestowing greater long-sightedness, enforces the chance of condemnation for a man's self, and makes him break his obedience, because he sees that his disobedience is somehow imperatively necessary for the well-being of others.

Arrah had never been relieved at all had it not been that a man came back to India in the summer of 1857, after two years' furlough in England, was sent up the Ganges to Buxar, and when there, heard that the three mutinous regiments from Dinapore were gone to lay siege to Arrah. Major Eyre did not then know of the failure of the first relief expedition under Captain Dunbar, but he knew that reinforcements would most probably be strongly needed; and so, instead of proceeding to Cawnpore, for which he and his troops, a battery of the Bengal artillery, were under orders, he came to the decision that his duty lay elsewhere—in other words, that he was wanted at Arrah.[1] There were no troops at Buxar, so he went on to Ghazipur, which was garrisoned

[1] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny.*

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by one strong native regiment and one company of the 78th Highlanders.

At Ghazipur he landed two guns, and embarking 25 men of the latter regiment on his steamer, went back to Buxar. When he reached there he found that, during his short absence at Ghazipur, a detachment of the 5th Fusiliers, numbering 154 men under Captain Ferdinand L'Estrange, had arrived. He promptly went on board their steamer and interviewed Captain L'Estrange. After a short conversation with him, he became convinced that here was the very man he needed to help him in his proposed expedition to Arrah, so much was he attracted by L'Estrange's capabilities, promptitude and energy. Eyre suggested that they should both join forces, and go together to relieve Arrah. This L'Estrange agreed to do, provided that Major Eyre took all the responsibility of the action, to which proposal the Major readily consented.

The next thing now was to write to Major-General Lloyd at Dinapore, and acquaint him with his intention to march to Arrah; and a letter, therefore, to this effect, and asking for a further supply of troops, was accordingly despatched.

When the reply from Dinapore reached him, Eyre was already started on his expedition. It was a most discouraging letter, telling him of the

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failure of the first relieving party and forbidding him to start, or, if started, ordering him to return immediately to Buxar, and there wait for further orders. But Eyre turned his blind eye to this command, and went forward to Arrah, as he had decided; and thanks to his decision, the station was saved, and the province of Behar as well. Malleson speaks very strongly of his action in thus taking the law into his own hands. He praises him for having 'risked his reputation as a soldier, his very commission as an officer,' in thus saving all Behar 'from the fate which, but for him, would have overtaken Arrah.'

Sir Vincent Eyre (Major as he then was) had already served with distinction in Afghanistan during the war, and indeed he was one of those who had been chosen by the English General as hostages to Muhammad Akbar Khan. He remained in captivity, with his wife and child, for nine months after the English army was withdrawn. In 1843 Eyre returned to India, and was quartered at Meerut. Here he started a club for soldiers—the very first of its kind. Later on, in 1844, he was appointed to the command of the artillery of the Gwalior contingent, where his great talents of organisation showed themselves in various ways,[1] notably those of road-making and

[1] H. G. Keene, *National Biography*.

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engineering, as well as in the architectural way, for among other things he was largely instrumental in building a church there.

Vincent Eyre was one of the bravest and best of soldiers. In war-time his best self came to the front. Brilliantly clever, witty, artistic, and attractive as he could be in time of peace, yet it was as a man of action that his true, best self showed up, and there can be no two opinions as to the great part he played in the fortunes of British India. Had it not been for his prompt action in organising the relief party which went to the rescue of the Arrah garrison, in all probability the Indian Mutiny would have ended in a very different way to what it did.

And now it is necessary to make a slight digression, in order to account for the statement that Sir Vincent Eyre's relief of Arrah was the means of saving the province of Behar as well. When the mutiny first broke out, Mr. William Tayler was Commissioner of Patna. He was the very man for a crisis; one who was, according to Colonel Malleson, 'incapable even under the darkest circumstances of showing hesitation or fear.'

After the outbreak at Meerut in June, Tayler called all the Europeans together for a consultation as to the best means to be pursued at Patna.

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On June 7th he fortified his own house and invited all the Europeans in the station to take refuge in it.

Then later, finding that his own native guards were in league with the disaffected Dinapore regiments, he at once sent for a supply of Major Rattray's recently enrolled regiment of Sikhs.

Every day there came news of fresh revolts, fresh mutinies, but Patna remained quiescent and untroubled. It was a matter of great wonder that mutiny had not been heard of in its immediate neighbourhood. But that it should have been a wonder was simply because people were quite unaware what rare powers of dealing promptly with an emergency were possessed by the commissioner in office. He tried, but quite unsuccessfully, to persuade Major-General Lloyd to disarm the native troops.[1] He himself held under his own immediate supervision six districts, and by being unceasingly on the *qui vive*, and in touch with all that went on in them, he practically had his finger always on the pulse of events. His plan was to send for the native chiefs, and all the natives who showed signs of disaffection, ostensibly for consultation on matters of immediate local moment. He prepared carefully for their comfort and suitable accommodation while they were with

[1] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny.*

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him, and in the meantime he called on the natives to give up their arms, and this in great measure they did at his request. Then, when the long-expected insurrection at Patna really occurred, Tayler was quite prepared for the mutineers, and his faithful Sikhs very soon quelled it.

Thus, in spite of extraordinary difficulties, he had kept guard over, and saved, simply by his own untiring exertions, the whole province of Behar. Then, through the cowardice and dereliction of duty of the magistrate of the Gazá district, trouble, undeserved and unjust, fell upon the one man whom of all others Government should most have honoured.

To rightly understand how this came to pass, it is necessary to remember that at that time the fate of Arrah was regarded as certain, its downfall absolutely inevitable. Tayler, among many others, was not aware that Sir Vincent Eyre had gone to its relief. All that was known was that the first relief party had met with absolute defeat at the hands of an overpowering force of mutineers.

Tayler sent a withdrawal order for the officials at Gazá. But, it had only reference to the 'inevitable consequences of the fall of Arrah.'[1]

[1] He knew that 'if Koer Singh had conquered Arrah, he would overrun the whole province of Behar.'

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His letter to Mr. Alonzo Money, magistrate of Gazá, was worded thus: 'Fall back with European residents and troops upon Patna'; and he directed that he should bring the treasure (worth about £80,000 of Government money), 'unless by so doing the personal safety of European residents should be endangered.'

What happened? Mr. Money and his escort evacuated the station before even any immediate danger threatened, and left all the treasure behind. But one of the party was not without his serious qualms of conscience. Mr. Hollings, of the opium department, felt more and more as he rode away, and the distance lengthened between Gazá and the Government party, that they were all doing a disgraceful act. 'At last he could bear it no longer,' and he said out his thoughts to Money. After some talk, the latter became also convinced that he was right, and he came to the decision that he had better go back to Gazá with Hollings; and this he did, leaving the rest of the party to continue their way without him. Eventually he took the treasure to Calcutta.

Yet it was this man whom the Government rewarded—this man whom they made a C.B., while the real saviour of Behar, who had maintained order all through a most crucial time of unexampled difficulty, was dismissed office on account of the

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misrepresentations of the magistrate of Gazá with regard to the withdrawal order.

Mr. Frederick Halliday, then in authority in Bengal, and Tayler's superior officer, was a man whose nerve failed him absolutely in the presence of a great crisis. His incompetence, and that of Major-General Lloyd, in effect nullified all that Tayler had done for Behar, and later, allowed the province to drift into absolute disorder.

When Eyre stamped out the rebellion at Jugdespore, he restored Behar to the state in which Tayler, until he was dismissed office by a hopelessly incompetent government, had always maintained it. I cannot help quoting here Colonel Malleson's words relating to Tayler's work for his province:—

'In the history of the mutiny there is no story which appeals more to the admiration, than the story of this man, guiding, almost unaided, a province through the storm; training his crew and keeping down the foe, while yet both hands were at the wheel, and in the end steering his vessel into the harbour of safety. Character, courage, tact, clearness of vision, firmness of brain, were in him alike conspicuous. . . . The wisdom and daring of Mr. Tayler, the energy and determination of Major Eyre, had atoned for the feebleness and timidity of the leaders who did

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not guide. . . . This man (Tayler) had accomplished as much as any individual to save India in her great danger.' And again: 'He had suppressed unaided the rising of Patna: he had been a rock on which every hope in Behar had rested; had cheered the despairing, stimulated the wavering.' Nevertheless, to the shame of the Government, this man was disgraced: turned out of office, and denied justice. And his is not, unfortunately, a solitary case. It has not been forgotten—*never* will be forgotten—how it treated one of the finest knights of the nineteenth century, Sir James Outram. So it would have treated Sir Vincent Eyre (for whom Sir James Outram[1] begged that a 'V.C.' might be given, and whom he repeatedly mentioned in his despatches), had it not been for a friend's chance meeting with him in Pall Mall. This was the cause of his case being set before the War Office, and the lack of attention being rectified. When Major-General Lloyd retired, later, from office, the honourable garrison at Arrah, the splendid relief under Sir Vincent Eyre, were all forgotten, and no recognition of any sort taken of feats which had saved the Empire.

[1] Sir James Outram wrote to Eyre in 1857: 'If acts of devotion to one's country entitle to the cross, then surely the devotion you displayed at Arrah . . . ought to secure it to you of all men.'

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Benares, Allahabad, Patna, Dinapore, Behar—who saved them for England? North of Behar, Mr. Frederick Gubbins, Judge in the Civil Service, who virtually, by his prompt action and foresight, administered Benares. Colonel Neill, whose clever, resolute actions practically were the means of stamping out rebellion, whenever and wherever it raised its head. South of Benares, Patna, and the province of Behar in particular, Mr. William Tayler and Sir Vincent Eyre saved the empire for England. Mr. Herwald Wake and his party kept the mutineers at bay until Eyre could bring relief. These all are names to be greatly honoured. These are the subordinates who won the battle, upheld their country's honour for their countrymen: the real upholders of the credit, the fame, the respect of England.

. . . . . .

Sir Vincent Eyre intended to start on his relief expedition to Arrah early on July 30th, but Captain Hastings, whom he had made his staff-officer, found that all the necessaries of transport could not possibly be collected before late afternoon; consequently it was four o'clock before the force started on its way.

It consisted of 40 artillerymen and three guns, 154 men of the 5th Fusiliers, nine officers—Sir Vincent Eyre, leader of the expedition, Captain

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Hastings, his staff-officer, Captain L'Estrange of the 5th Fusiliers, Captain Scott, and Ensigns Lewis, Oldfield and Mason; also Surgeon-General Eteson and Surgeon-General (now Sir James) Thornton. Mr. Bax-Ironside, magistrate of Ghazipur, also went with them in his official capacity as civil officer; eighteen volunteers, of whom the greater number were mounted, and three officers completed the number.

Mr. Bax-Ironside—then Mr. Bax (he did not take the name of 'Ironside' till later)—was 'detailed for duty when Major Eyre returned from Ghazipur, to be civilian officer with the force to aid in collecting supplies, summoning rich natives, and aiding, by legal process, where and when possible.'[1] In Lieut.-Colonel Malleson's 'Recreations of an Indian Official,' he thus speaks of Mr. Bax-Ironside: 'The knowledge of the district possessed by Mr. Bax, his coolness and determination, together with his influence with the natives in procuring carriage, rendered his presence with the force, of no small advantage.' And later: 'Through Mr. Bax's exertions, four elephants were contributed by Dumrao Rajah, for conveying tents and bedding.' These proved later on in the expedition unfaithful to their charge, for, before

[1] Surgeon-General Eteson.

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Arrah was reached, the elephants turned tail, and were soon in full retreat, and with them went the beds, bedding and greatcoats of the men!

No horses were available, so the guns had to be drawn by bullocks taken straight from the plough.[1] 'Carts for the reserve ammunition and commissariat supplies had to be secured. In this work Major Eyre found an able and willing coadjutor in Mr. Bax, the district magistrate.'

The bullocks had the greatest difficulty in making way with the guns, for the roads were almost impassable from the recent rains, and this made it very heavy going. Indeed, frequent stoppages for rest were an absolute necessity if they were to drag them at all, and it was day-break before the first camping ground was reached. The men were by this time very footsore, and had suffered much from the heat; and besides this, they had but just returned from a long sea voyage. Before halting, the volunteers, who were in advance of the party, became aware that their steps were being dogged by a native on a white horse. When they recognised that he must be a spy, some of them promptly gave chase—no easy matter considering that the land was more or less under water, and that it was impossible for any but light weights to gallop in pursuit of

[1] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny.*

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him. But happily there were two or three men who were not too heavy for the job. One of these, a Frenchman, succeeded in coming up with him; when he immediately turned in his saddle and dealt a savage blow at his pursuer, which cut deep into his horse's neck. Two others coming up at this moment, the supposed spy was taken in charge, brought into camp, proved to be what he had been taken for, and paid with his life for his temerity.[1]

At three o'clock the following day the march was resumed. From time to time videttes of the enemy were seen at a distance, and once a native approached near the camp, and, on being perceived, galloped away, but was pursued and shot. As Sir Vincent Eyre felt quite confident that the enemy's forces were not far off, a halt for the night was made at Sháhpúr. August 1st found them still going forward, but not yet could they see any signs of Koer Singh's rebel army. It was on this day, however, that they first heard of the terrible defeat which had befallen the first relief party under Captain Dunbar; and though at first Sir Vincent Eyre did not give absolute credence to the story, yet he determined to press on and do his utmost for the relief of the garrison at Arrah. As they went on, news was brought him that the

[1] Mr. Charles Kelly, *Relief of Arrah.*

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Sepoys were breaking up all the bridges between his army and Arrah; nevertheless a little superficial mending served to prevent the troops being seriously hindered. From time to time small bodies of Koer Singh's cavalry were seen galloping about across the surrounding country, though they never allowed themselves to get within range of the English guns. When night fell a third halt was made, and Eyre and his force encamped close to the village of Gajrájganj, having crossed the nullah (river) at Baláotí. Here a strong bridge was found untouched, the enemy's plan evidently having been to attack them directly they had crossed it; for they seemed to have confidently expected that Sir Vincent Eyre's troops would follow the example of those led by Captain Dunbar and continue marching at night, when they felt sure of being able to cut them to pieces as they had done with the others three days since.

Sir Vincent Eyre, however, was a very different kind of man, and he had no thought of marching by night; he contented himself with placing a very strong guard of his men to protect the road across the bridge.

The next day was Sunday, and a start was made at daybreak through the village of Gajrájganj. They had barely reached the country beyond, when the enemy's bugles rang out the

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'assembly' from a wood straight ahead, through which Eyre's troops would be obliged to pass on their way to Arrah. On each side of the road were inundated rice and poppy fields. Sir Vincent Eyre halted his men and opened fire on the wood. This soon showed the enemy that their ambush was no longer a secret, and they could now be seen galloping round on both flanks in order to attack in the rear. This was the signal for Eyre to send skirmishing parties in all directions, while his three guns opened fire on the front flank.

Sir Vincent Eyre, in his despatch to Major-General Lloyd at Dinapore, says: 'The Enfield Rifles kept our foes back at a distance, and we succeeded in forcing the woods, beyond which as far as Bubugunge, it' (their course) 'lay across an open swamp, which greatly befriended us.' Unluckily, however, the same thing happened here, as happens very often now in a railway journey—they lost all their baggage. The rebel force was practically surrounding them on all sides, and as they were well within rifle range, the drivers of the carts, elephants, &c., took to flight, and made for the fields. It was now that the elephants, as I have said, paid their drivers the sincerest flattery of which they were capable, and imitating their stampede, went off with all the bedding, men's greatcoats, &c., and were seen no more.

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There was a village about two miles off, called Bibiganj, and here the Sepoys took up their position in readiness to oppose Sir Vincent Eyre's force. Seeing this at once, Eyre halted to reconnoitre; and his troops took what refreshment there was to take, which was not much, as most of the commissariat stores had been lost when the drivers decamped.

Eyre saw that before his force could reach Arrah (now within measurable distance), a wood must be crossed, and a bridge of sorts manufactured, as the enemy had broken down the one which had been there, and were occupying houses in the village; so he determined to 'make a detour to the right, as far as the railway earthworks, about a mile off,' and issued orders to that effect. He tried to mask his movement by firing on the village with his guns, while the infantry and carts made the best of their way along the road to the embankment. This ruse, however, was soon discovered by the enemy, who went in great numbers to intercept the troops at the angle of the thick wood, knowing it was imperative that they should pass it on their way to Arrah. Sir Vincent Eyre saw very soon that the enemy would reach the wood before he did himself. He saw too, that he 'must carry the wood or

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be 'lost.' The Sepoys did not wait to be attacked, but the bugles sounded the 'Advance,' and their forces, about 2500 strong, headed by Koer Singh himself, charged the guns.[1] For more than an hour the English army, who were fighting a force of twenty times their strength, 'were compelled,' as Sir Vincent Eyre's despatch says, 'to act solely on the defensive. . . . The Sepoys . . . made two determined rushes on our guns, but were on both occasions repulsed with showers of grape.'

And now indeed Eyre's army had reached the most critical moment of the whole day. The enemy, confident in their greater force of numbers and in their superior position, began to press in on all sides. Men began to fall fast under the fire poured into their ranks by the Sepoy musketry, and it became evident to Captain Hastings[2] (for Eyre was of necessity obliged to remain with the guns), that something must be done at once to avoid defeat. He galloped up to Eyre, and told him that his men were becoming disheartened, and that 'the position was becoming critical.'

Eyre, who before all things was *the* man for emergencies and critical moments, ordered

[1] Sir G. O. Trevelyan, *Interludes in Verse and Prose.*

[2] Mr. Colvin tells me that Hastings was splendidly energetic and resourceful.

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a bayonet charge, knowing well that the natives rarely face their enemy at close quarters. I quote now from Surgeon-General Eteson's private account of this expedition. 'Hastings saluted, and rode away. For a while there was a pause in the musketry, and Siddal, the Veterinary-Surgeon to the Stud,[1] cried out, "Here they come for the guns, Major," and, with bugle calls, a rush was made from some cover to our extreme left; but there was nothing in it, only scattered bravery. A 8-pr. was swung round and grape fired. Not a man got within sixty yards, but it was a dangerous crisis. I looked round and saw Mr. Bax, magistrate, standing beneath a tree in our grove. He was very pale. I noticed his lips moving in silent prayer; and I knew of the dear ones he had left only four days before in ignorance of the coming peril.'

Captain Hastings led one flank of the army, and Captain L'Estrange the other. 'Men rushed forward with a cheer . . . cleared the deep stream . . . at a bound, and charged impetuously an enemy twenty times as numerous as *they* were.'[2] At the same time the guns 'with grape and shrapnel drove in the centre.'[3]

[1] The Government owned a large breeding stud at Buxar.
[2] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny*.
[3] 'Despatch' of Major Eyre.

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The Sepoys were completely taken off their guard; they did not wait for the onslaught, but broke rank in complete disorder and panic. Their retreat soon began to be an utter rout. Flying bands of the enemy were seen in all directions and the little English army swept them across the country. Six hundred of the enemy's force are said to have been slain on this occasion.

The road was now clear, and Major Eyre made his way to within four miles of Arrah, when he found their farther passage stopped by a river about sixty feet wide, deep, and with rapid current. By this time it was late afternoon, but the troops at once set to work to make a bridge, and by daybreak it was sufficiently strong for the army to cross, though not yet for the guns to do so.

When the troops had landed on the other side, a native came up with a letter, which proved to be from Arrah house: 'We hear that a relief has arrived, we are all well—I know nothing of the bearer.—Signed, H. WAKE.' The native told them that on the previous evening Koer Singh's army had gone back from Arrah in haste, and, taking away their baggage, had retired altogether from the village. As Eyre's troops came from the north to Arrah, the ghastly sight which awaited them later of rows and rows of

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those who had fallen on the ill-fated first relief expedition under Captain Dunbar, and of the corpses which hung on each side from the branches of trees which bordered the road beyond Arrah, was not then visible.

On the morning of Tuesday there was not a Sepoy left at Arrah. 'And then our countrymen came forth, unwashed, unshaved, begrimed with dust and powder, haggard with anxiety and want of sleep, but very joyous and thankful at heart, pleased to stand once more beneath the open sky, and to roam fearlessly through their old haunts, in which the twittering of birds and the chirping of grasshoppers had succeeded to the ceaseless din of musketry; pleased with the first long draught of sherry and soda-water, and with the cool breath of dawn after the atmosphere of a vault, without window or punkah, filled to suffocation with the smoke of their rifles. . . . Still, as in Londonderry of old, the real strength of a besieged place consists not in the scientific construction of the defences, nor in the multitude of the garrison, nor in abundant stores of provision and ordnance, but in the spirit which is prepared to dare all, and to endure all, sooner than allow the assailants to set foot within the wall.' [1]

[1] Sir G. O. Trevelyan, *Interludes in Verse and Prose.*

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Well, the relief of Arrah was an accomplished feat; achieved in the face of almost overwhelming odds, and by a force of only half the number of that of the first expedition under Captain Dunbar. But then it is necessary to bear in mind that Captain Dunbar had learnt all the soldiering that he knew in a school of theory, not of practice; whereas Sir Vincent Eyre was a born leader of men, a born strategist, a man who could turn the 'forlorn hope' into the brilliant, unexpected victory.

Mr. Ross Lowis Mangles and Mr. William Fraser McDonell were both personal friends[1] of Mr. Herwald Wake, the Arrah magistrate. The former, Mr. Mangles, came to India in 1853, and was in 1857 assistant magistrate at Patna, under Mr. William Tayler, who was Commissioner there. Later on, he served as Judicial Commissioner of Mysore; in 1875-6-7, as Secretary to the Government of Bengal; and from 1879 to 1882 was one of the members of the Board of Revenue in the Lower Provinces.

Mr. Fraser McDonell was, in 1857, magistrate of Chuprah, and afterwards for thirteen years Judge of the High Court. He retired from the Indian Civil Service in 1886.

[1] 'Wake is one of the greatest friends I have got,' Mr. Ross Mangles wrote in a letter of that year.

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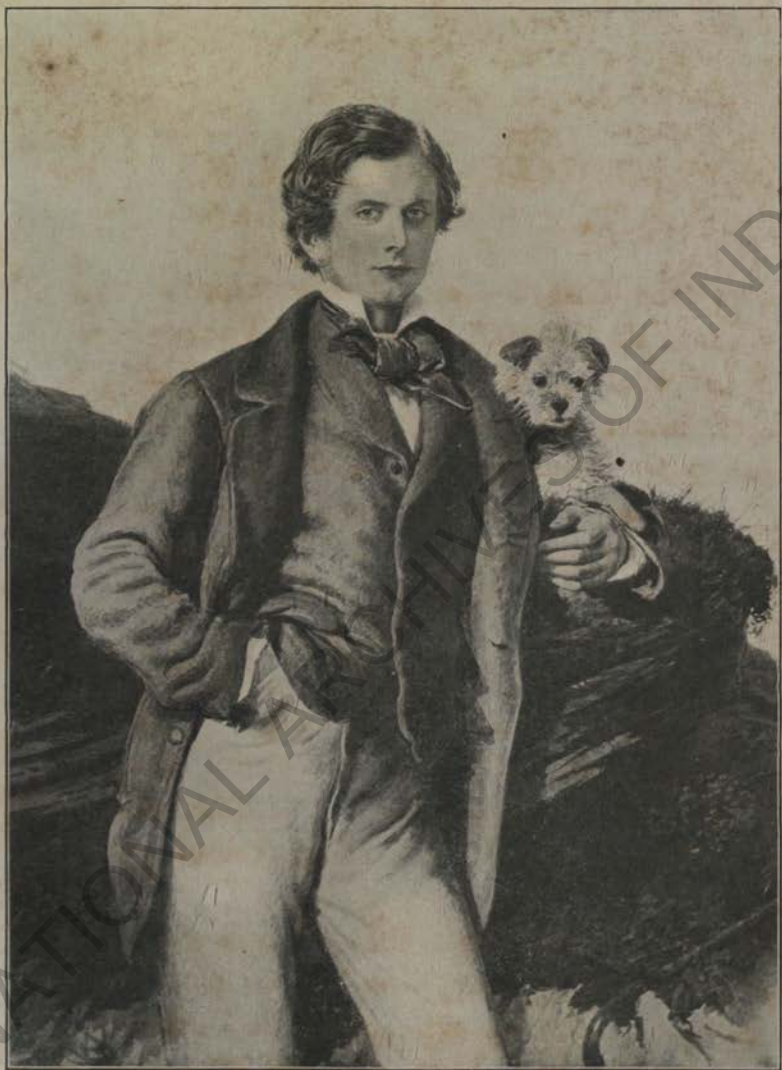

HERWALD WAKE.

From a painting done before he went out to India.

By kind permission of Mr. Herwald Wake, his son.

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HERWALD WAKE: THE MAN WHO HELD THE FORT AT ARRAH

AROUND the past history of the man who has distinguished himself by some great achievement hangs always a special interest, a special mystery, into which we long to look. We like to go up the stairs of his life, and to see the very rooms of thought and purpose in which his personality gradually developed. Or is it that we regard his childhood and young manhood as the rungs of the ladder on which he climbed, step by step, to higher deeds, to better achievements, and desire greatly to see for our own selves, if *we* could not rise by the same medium to heights which we see from afar, and below, and which seem so infinitely out of our reach?

In the life of the hero of the defence of Arrah, there is no lack of *energy*, no lack of purposeful determination. Though but a civilian, many a soldier would have been proud to have held the fort as he did, during one of the most

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critical moments of the whole mutiny; and that, too, in the teeth of an overwhelming force of Sepoys. It was not by might, nor by power, but by sheer force of personality that this was done, and because he was a man for whom Fear was an unknown quantity. He had never even seen its face, nor had its cold breath ever come near him.

There are few greater powers than Heredity: that power of Handing-Down all along the line, of some quality which, incomprehensible it may seem, is inherent in the blood. Herwald Wake had a notable ancestor, from whom he inherited his fearless valour, his determined courage, his clever foresight in outwitting his enemies—Hereward the Wake.

The names 'Herwald' and 'Herewald' are simply different ways of spelling 'Hereward,' but 'Herwald' is the way it is spelt in the Chronicle of Ingulf. Herwald Wake's family have every reason to believe that they are descended from the man who, for three years, defied the Normans openly and continuously; and under whose banner 'all the valour and nobility of Old England yet surviving gathered around the great Chieftain.'[1] That man who, when the worst fate befell him and his adherents,

[1] A. D. Crake, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

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and he was assailed on all sides, simply *could not be beaten*, and rather than submit, cut his way through the enemy's army and escaped to his own fens.

Mr. Crake tells us that it was long a popular saying, both among English and Normans, that, 'had there been four such as he the Conquest could not have been accomplished.' And there is strong ground for slightly altering that saying almost nine centuries later into this modern form: that had there been four Herwald Wakes, the Indian Mutiny had failed at its outset.

In some of the editions of Kingsley's 'Hereward the Wake,' the arms of the Wake family (to whom Herwald Wake, of mutiny fame, belongs) are printed on the title-page. I am aware that there are critics who find pleasure in undermining the most inspiring traditions of our country, and who declare that Hereward the Wake was a myth. They belong to the school who throw doubts on Shakspeare, do not believe Arthur ever had a Table, and refuse to allow the Ideal a passage through the commercial commonplace of everyday life. There will be Thomases in every age, the only difference being that the modern Thomas does not repent later.

Ingulf states, in his Chronicle, that Hereward's

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daughter (by Torfrida) married Hugh de Evermue, and that it is from her that the family of Herwald Wakes is descended.

Mr. Herwald Wake, C.B., the hero of Arrah, was born March 10, 1829, at Tapton Court, near Chesterfield.[1] His father, Mr. Charles Wake, was living there in order to be near his brother-in-law, Sir George Sitwell. They had both married sisters of the Rev. A. C. Tait, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. From Mr. Herwald Wake's son[2] I have many anecdotes of his father's boyhood and youth. He was a very high-spirited boy, and his governess found the managing of him an impossible task, for disputes ended once or twice in her being thrown down.

Consequently he was sent to school, at Bath, when he was seven years old. Later on he went to Rugby, where Dr. Arnold was then head-master. Here his talent for fighting showed itself more than any special taste for study.

'I remember a meeting between him and an old colonel who had not seen him since the Rugby days, who said: "Do you fight much now, Wake?

[1] His brother, Captain Wake, R.N., of the *Bulldog*, was one of those fearless, fine characters, whom the world often misunderstands. After his gallant rescue of an English vessel off the harbour of Cape Haytien, he was actually tried by a court-martial for what was called a 'political offence.'

[2] Mr. Herwald Wake, of Folkestone.

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My remembrance of you was that you were always fighting!" He was often in hot water at school; once, I believe, for scaling the clock-tower and carving his name on the hands of the clock' (perhaps this feat of his was the origin of the story in 'Tom Brown's Schooldays,' where Tom Brown and East are reported to have done the same. Herwald Wake was certainly at Rugby under Dr. Arnold). 'He was flogged and confined in a room to which there was only a skylight, but he squirmed up the ropes that opened the window, and, escaping, went a ride on one of the elephants in a circus procession, which must have been a somewhat painful amusement, after being flogged.'

Wake went to a tutor at Godalming after leaving Rugby, and from thence to Haileybury. His first appointment in India was as assistant to Mr. Charles MacKillup at Dacca, and later he was with the Mr. McDonell who won the V.C. during that disastrous relief expedition to Arrah, for cutting the rope which fastened the boat, full of English soldiers, to the land, under a heavy fire of bullets from the enemy.

Wake went out to India in the usual sailing ship of those days. During the voyage a quarrel broke out between him and a major of artillery, and they agreed to fight a duel when the ship touched at the Cape. But that duel was destined

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never to come off, for the ship never did touch at the Cape, and eventually the quarrel was thrown overboard, figuratively speaking, and before they reached India they had become great friends.

When the mutiny broke out Wake was magistrate, as has been shown, at Arrah. Mr. Colvin (who worked under him during the defence), went to Arrah as his second station in February 1857, to be assistant magistrate to Herwald Wake.

They both lived together until the defence of the bungalow began, and, as the former says in a letter to me, 'I had every opportunity of knowing him well and appreciating him. He was rather quick-tempered, but never bore malice. Energetic, most courageous, of commanding disposition, rather brusque in manner, at times in high spirits, but in poor health. . . . Altogether he had what one might call a highly-strung nature. He was a good magistrate . . . and a firm friend. . . . He served some time after, but, I think owing to bad health, had to retire on sick pension. I met him when home on furlough about 1867, and again on leaving the service, 1876-1877, more frequently. Latterly he became more unwell, and spent the last years of his life abroad as an invalid. . . . Although I did not always agree with him, I preserve the most pleasant recollections of our intercourse and long friendship. . . . I cannot

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help expressing my firm and deliberate opinion that he (Wake) throughout the defence was our leader, most ably seconded by the rest. I desire to have it *thoroughly known* and appreciated that Wake was our Leader. The Sikhs most certainly looked up to him. . . . I wrote in 1857 that Boyle worked capitally, and was of good use, *but Wake was the Head and took the lead from the first.*' [1]

In connexion with the point alluded to in this letter by Colvin,[2] it is necessary again briefly to refer to certain erroneous statements which have been made in some accounts of the defence of Arrah, in which it certainly does not clearly appear that Wake was the moving spirit throughout the defence, though this was the truth. The following letter from Wake himself elucidates any doubt there might have been in this connexion. I think it only right to insert it here, because it states very plainly and straightforwardly the actual state of affairs both before and during the siege.

[1] This is also vouched for in a letter from Mr. Ross Mangles, V.C.

[2] From Mr. Herwald Wake, son of Mr. Herwald Wake of Arrah (about whom is the above letter), I have the following story, which the former asks me to insert, in connexion with his great friend, Mr. Colvin. 'The latter,' he says, 'was standing one day in deep dejection during the siege. Mr. Wake, knowing him to be brave as a lion and the last man to be depressed by danger, could not understand what was the matter until he found he had rammed down by mistake two charges into his rifle, and thus rendered it unfireable'!

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Herwald Wake to J. C. Colvin.

'COURTEEN HALL,
'*Feb.* 7, 1859.

'. . . The facts simply are, that in the first place *I* wished to prepare a place for defence, and for that purpose got Boyle to go with me and examine the Collectorate, and Burne's and Co.'s bungalow, both too large for the purpose, and that afterwards I pointed out to him that his bungalow was *the* place, but this was not until the flight of the railway gents'[1] (about June 8th or 9th), 'so that nothing could then be done, and nothing was settled, we being so few in the station, and our ladies in safety, and myself very seedy, the subject was not renewed; but that afterwards when, from the reports, it became evident that a mutiny would be attended by a simultaneous insurrection of Kooer Singh's followers, which would probably be followed by a rush on the station, I certainly should again have brought that subject forward, and requested Boyle, as we had him present, to have prepared a place of refuge had he not already done so without letting us know what he was doing until he had done it, and this some time before I should have thought it necessary. He

[1] Probably just after they had announced their determination to bolt, and before Boyle left with his wife.

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has certainly let it about that he was laughed at for the very idea of a fortification, and this made it appear that he built it in spite of us, and of his own idea entirely. Now I remember there was a good deal of chaff, not at the bungalow, which I from the first, if you remember, thought capital in case of an emergency, but at the idea of our six or seven men, before the arrival of the Sikhs, holding it against Sepoys and villagers.

'He knew that the bungalow was my pick, and his fortifying it was certainly t[illegible] result of our previous consultation, but (he) [illegible]nted it from the first to be *Boyle's bungalow* [illegible]or he would have, of course, as he ought to h[illegible]ne, spoken to me before commencing it.

'Harry Mangles, the accou[illegible]t has just arrived, and he says he could no[illegible]m any official in Calcutta that the grant t[illegible]s true. They knew nothing about it, and h[illegible]ot believe it. If it is a lie it is a very bold stroke . . . (on the part of our friend or his friends). Lord Canning has never sent home his list of *deserving civilians*, though he has had several tākeeds on the subject. . . . Mrs. Mac (MacDonell) and Vincent are coming home next March. . . . Write and tell me whether you have much work and how you like it. Make haste and pass the exam., or they will make it an excuse for not promoting you,

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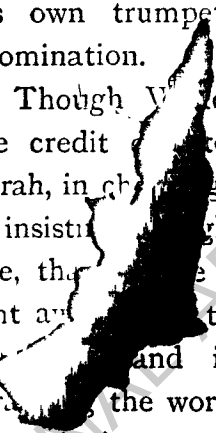
which I think they must do if you do; you must not be modest, but push your *claims* which are just. . . .'

This advice, however, was not one which the writer himself followed! When the recital of any achievement was going on, in which Wake had really been the chief actor, no one of his listeners would have guessed the great part he had played himself. He never cared to blow his own trumpet. Self-advertisement was his abomination.



Though W[illegible]e did not receive at the time the credit [illegible]to him for his splendid work at Arrah, in ch[illegible]g the best house for fortification, in insisti[illegible]h his decision was an unpopular one, th[illegible]e women and children should be sent a[illegible]time before the mutineers came to[illegible]and in directing, encouraging and arra[illegible] the work of the defence throughout the siege, it is not too much to say that had it not been for him Behar and the North-West Provinces, as well as Arrah, must have fallen completely into the hands of the Sepoys.

Arrah stands out for all time as one of those 'great, little things' which, as William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, said, stand for so much more in this life than the world is apt to recognise. Had it not been for the presence of the 'Tiger-spring,'

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as the Sikhs used to call Wake, his buoyant, quick, sudden resourcefulness and energy, there is no manner of doubt that the mutineers would have swept away all traces of English rule and occupation from that side of India; and it is quite possible that it would not have ended even there.

After Arrah, and the fight at Jugdespore in which, as his letter tells us, he felt so 'boisterously happy,' Wake longed to leave the Civil Service and go into the army. It is said that when he found this was not possible for him, he went and hid himself in a vessel going to Lucknow or Delhi, but his hiding-place was discovered before it started, and he was persuaded to come back.

His next appointment was at Patna—this was after his marriage in 1860—and it was here that his wife was so ill that she almost died. He came home with her early in 1862, and then returned to India as Political Superintendent of Darjeeling; and it was here that Mrs. Herwald Wake and her little son joined him in the autumn of the same year. 'Tempted by an offer that was then made by the Government to civilians, of three years at home on full pay, he resigned Darjeeling in 1865, and in 1868 he retired, hoping to get work in England. His intention was to go to the Bar.

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But he had a brother there, and his mother persuaded him to give up the idea, as she thought this might injure his brother's prospects.'

Mr. Wake never had liked the Indian Civil Service (although he said he should have cared more for work in the North-West Provinces), for he never could trust the Hindus, as, owing to their untruthfulness, he never could be sure if he was administering justice or not. However, later, when he had lived some time in England, he said he wanted to go back to India and apologise, 'on his hands and knees, to the Hindus, for he found that there were nearly as many liars in England'!

His great delight was to buy horses at Tattersall's, that went cheap because they were so bad-tempered and difficult to ride. He was a very Alexander the Great in riding horses that no one could manage; and in his hands they soon became tractable and good goers. Wake was a first-rate hunter and capital judge of horses, always liking best the wildest and most high-spirited ones. When he was quite an old man, and had given up hunting on account of family expenses, he was one day offered a mount by a friend, who was himself unable to manage the horse, and so wanted Wake to tame it, and break it in to ordinary behaviour in the conventional hunting field! Wake took it out with the Harriers. Later in

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the day, one of the owners of the pack said, 'This is nonsense. First came the hare, then Wake, then the huntsman, and *then the hounds!*'

It is said that most of the members of that hunt were old gentlemen, who stayed quietly on the top of the hill,' never thinking of actively joining in the chase; and Wake, who knew their habits, replied, 'I don't know how you know that, for you were none of you within sight!'

As has been mentioned in an earlier letter, Wake suffered much from ill health, and eventually he was ordered abroad on account of it. He died in 1901.

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KOER SINGH IS HUNTED TO HIS JUNGLE STRONGHOLD[1]

No sooner was Arrah relieved than martial law was proclaimed, and thirty Sepoys taken captive among the townspeople. Sir Vincent Eyre held a drumhead court-martial, at which he, as President, took precedence of the Judge and magistrates, who sat under him. Many of the townspeople testified against these captive rebels, and they were promptly 'hanged, or in effect strangled, in the gardens of Arrah house.' The request made in most instances simply was that they might be allowed to adjust the rope themselves; 'and all met death with dignity.'

These last six words testify strongly to the point of view with which the Indian regards death. Death to him is no great matter; the only question which *does* really matter is whether

[1] There had been an unfortunate previous expedition against Koer Singh, when he was driven across the Ganges in 1858, and took refuge in his jungle. The force that went from Arrah to turn him out was thoroughly defeated, its guns, elephants, baggage, and ammunition lost, and the death-roll of officers and men great.

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he has been true to his religious traditions. This being so, one cannot but deeply regret the manner in which some of our countrymen forced the mutineers' relations—not only themselves—to sin against their religion just before death.

It is a known fact that after Cawnpore, English officers used to encourage their men to treat the natives barbarously. Used to watch with a smile while their men pricked the captives with their bayonets; whilst they were forced to eat cow's flesh, and pig's flesh, a few moments before they were hanged. Indeed, what happened in many cases could be called by no other name than that of revenge, indefensible, barbarous and unworthy the troops of a Christian country.

Sir Evelyn Wood,[1] alluding to this drumhead court-martial at Arrah, says: 'An old man, while awaiting his turn on the gallows, and witnessing the painful struggles of a man dying in the air, opening his Kummerbund, took out all his property—three rupees—and said calmly, "This is my will! I give one rupee for prayers for my soul, one I leave for charitable purposes, and the third I bequeath to the man who hangs me." '[2]

[1] *Revolt in Hindustan.*

[2] I am indebted for the following story to the present Mr.

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The punishment of the rebels having been completed, Sir Vincent Eyre decided to take an expedition to Jugdespore, to track out the escaped Rajah and his army, who had retreated to their jungles. Jugdespore was distant from Arrah about sixteen miles, and it was generally considered that there were great risks in connexion with such an expedition as Eyre proposed. Koer Singh was believed to own an impregnable fortress situated in the midst of almost inaccessible jungles. But then Arrah had been considered a forlorn hope, and Vincent Eyre had not taken people's opinion in that matter, so neither did he propose to take it in this. He had faced and defeated the old chieftain once, now he meant to destroy his dominion utterly and altogether. He only waited until he was reinforced by the 10th Foot, and by 100 of Rattray's Sikhs from Dinapore, and then he started from Arrah on August 11th.

Herwald Wake, who is the son of Mr. Herwald Wake, of Arrah fame: 'During these court martials, a villager was accused of murdering some women and children, the evidence against him being some boots found in his house. Mr. Wake pointed out that this was no evidence, as he was a bootmaker, and got him acquitted. He saw, however, that when the man left the hut where the court was held, some soldiers of the English regiment closed round him and hustled him away. Mr. Wake ran out and found they were going to hang him. When he interfered they threatened to hang him also, but he was rescued by their officers, who warned him they were quite capable of carrying out their threat.'

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I quote now from the same MS. account, written by one of the survivors of the defence of Arrah, from which I quoted before:—

'*August* 4.—Remained quiet at Arrah waiting for stores and reinforcements. Burned a village in which plundered property was found.

'*August* 5.—Ammunition which was much wanted came in to-day. Wake put in command of our Sikhs who were in the bungalow, and I under him.

'*August* 6.—Two hundred of H.M. 10th Foot arrived to-day, and went over to where the detachment sent to our relief from Dinapore were so dreadfully mauled; saw ropes hanging from the trees which evidently had been used to hang, as we suppose, the wounded. We saw round one of the skeleton's necks a piece of rope[1] which put an end to any doubts we might have had on the subject.

'The Judge's, and his subordinate's courts were totally destroyed by fire, with all records, also the magistrate's. The Collectorate had escaped, as the rebels had made it their headquarters. We could from our bungalow see the Rajah's parade

[1] Sir Evelyn Wood says in his *Revolt in Hindustan* that just outside Arrah road, which was bordered by tamarind trees, the corpses of 104 British soldiers, who were killed in the ill-fated first relief expedition, were hung.

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in the evening, and Koer Singh was seen with silver chowries (emblems of power) waving over him. The jail is a good deal damaged; and the town very deserted.

'*August* 7 *and* 8.—Remained at Arrah.

'*August* 9.—One hundred more of Rattray's Sikhs arrived, so that now we are nearly 500 strong.

'*August* 10.—Nothing doing.

'*August* 11.—Left Arrah for Jugdespore, the headquarters of the rebel chief; we expect some hard work and fighting before we get in. I went in the advanced guard with our Sikhs, throwing out skirmishers at every wood and cover—met no one. We passed over the battlefield, and it seemed miraculous that our men escaped being beaten, as the rebels at one time had almost entirely surrounded them, and very fortunate it was that Major Eyre had more than the 25 Highlanders with him, which was the force he at one time proposed bringing with him; for such a little party would inevitably have been destroyed, and the guns lost.'

Koer Singh had never believed that Sir Vincent Eyre would go beyond Arrah, and he himself proposed to take his army to Delhi. However, there was no danger of his being taken by surprise, for the Rajah was in his own country;

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the country people were all devoted to him, and he was soon informed of the advance of the English army upon his jungle territories. Sir Vincent Eyre marched eight miles to the stream's brink, and camped there on the night of August 11th. On the following morning the enemy were seen to be in front in great force; for Koer Singh had called in all his forces, and had fortified Diláwar with earthworks. Here he meant to take his stand. And indeed it was undeniably a strong position. In front of his army was the river. Diláwar was the centre of his forces, and, behind that, the great and formidable jungle—every bit of which was familiar ground to his followers and to himself—which lay between Diláwar and Jugdespore. It may readily be understood that it needed some resolute bravery, some determination, to meet a foe such as Koer Singh and his enormous army, on ground on which they were absolutely at home, and on which the English were absolute strangers. Sir Vincent Eyre was baffled by no unfamiliarity of surroundings, no cunningness of stronghold: thus no uncertainty of plan showed itself in him. He sent Captain Patterson[1] and his skirmishers to attack the enemy's right, and

[1] Captain Patterson, of the 10th Foot.

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when this move produced a retort from them, he opened on them a deadly hail of grape[1] which drew them from their shelter. Now followed a sudden rush from Eyre's men of the 10th Foot, and a hearty cheer, which drove the enemy across the stream into Dilăwar and the jungle. In the meantime Captains L'Estrange and Scott, with the 5th Fusiliers, tackled the left flank of Koer Singh's army, which consisted of irregulars both of horse and foot. These offered practically no resistance at all, but fell back at once on to the jungle—that Last Hope of the Indian native. Diláwar was soon in the possession of the English, and Eyre sent his men right and left through the jungle (a matter of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length) in pursuit of their foes, who by now, having become hopeless and disheartened, were retreating in all directions. By mid-day Eyre had taken Jugdespore, after only about two-and-a-half hours' fighting.[2] Koer Singh's men had rapidly grown more and more disheartened. They could not hold the fort, and so the retreat across the jungle had been universal. They left their guns behind, and contented themselves with only a dropping fire from time to time. The total loss in Koer Singh's army was about 200 men, whilst in the

[1] Col. Malleson, *Recreations of an Indian Official.*
[2] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny.*

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English camp there was no loss of life, only six men wounded.

On August 14th Eyre received an order of recall from General Outram, who was on his way to the relief of Lucknow, and wished him to join forces with his army. Before he left Jugdespore, however, Eyre,[1] 'in order more thoroughly to destroy Koer Singh's prestige among the natives, blew up the palace' (and a new Hindu temple[2]) 'and principal buildings, where he had established a manufactory of arms and ammunition, and had laid up large stores of provisions; and which, therefore, offered a tempting rendezvous for malcontents in such dangerous times.'

It will not be forgotten that it was, ostensibly, on account of the blowing up of the Hindu temple, that Eyre's services did not meet with the recognition which was due to them at the hands of the Commander-in-Chief.

Koer Singh managed to keep his army together for many months, and made his way to Oudh instead of Delhi; and an intermittent warfare consequently went on between him and the English, until Sir

[1] Col. Malleson, *Recreations of an Indian Official.*

[2] One of the survivors of the siege of Arrah tells me that he thinks that as the temple was used as a military depot, Sir Vincent Eyre did right in having it blown up, and that the subsequent treatment accorded him was unfair and wrong.

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Edward Lugard forced him back to his jungles. Eventually he was mortally wounded whilst crossing the Ganges, but not before he had provided for the escape of the greater part of his army. The following MS. account of one of the officers in command of Sir Vincent Eyre's force has been kindly lent me for quotation. Evidently, at first, things did not go so unresistingly in favour of the English, when the chase of Koer Singh's troops across the jungle began:—

'The mutineers for a short time seemed as if they were going to make a good fight of it, as they kept up a steady fire from the breachworks. . . . Getting ahead of and separated from my Sikhs, I went with the 5th for some time, who seemed to me just to fire, give a cheer, rush on, load and fire, and so on. When we rode back across the nullah (during which time the balls fell pretty thick about me, and one or two of our shells passed over-head; the rebels evidently had some Enfield rifles, taken probably from the 37th and 10th,' which had been defeated by them on their way to our relief), and the guns, where the fire was thickest, finding Major Eyre here, I volunteered my services as an A.D.C., or in any way I could make myself useful.

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'There was at first a slight difficulty in crossing the guns, as we nearly got them into a quick-sand, but we soon got them over. The way lay through a small village, after which came about a mile and a half of jungle, in which there was some skirmishing; and last of all the town of Jugdespore, where we found two old guns loaded . . . which, however, in the hurry had not been fired. No opposition was offered here, and we quietly marched into Baboo Kowar Sing's house and took possession, and thus ended the engagement in which we had only 6 wounded. None of us expected to have got in so easily, for the rebels were in great force, and capitally posted; but they seemed to want pluck and leading when we came to attack them.[1] We were quartered in Kowar Sing's own private house, separated from the rest of the buildings by a wall; and a very jolly place it was, with a little garden and water laid out in front. The soldiers killed all the unfortunate cranes and other birds which were there.

'Lots of freshly made powder and ball cartridges were found, and also three large bags of

[1] I am told by a friend who was in Arrah house during the siege that the Sepoys then lacked a good leader, and, besides that, they expected a speedy surrender of the garrison.

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the Company's caps, which showed the absurdity of the report we had heard that they were short of these necessaries. Plenty of grain was stored up, which of course we made use of. The soldiers came out in rather extraordinary dresses in the evening, having wrapped themselves round with shawls and all kinds of native dresses.

'*August* 13.—Was called at daylight to go to a hunting box of Kowar Sing's, some eight miles in the jungles, with a party of Sikhs and Europeans, to see if anyone was there. We had a very pleasant march through the jungle (which reminded me a good deal of the Leatherhead[1] common, making allowances for the different trees), and arrived at the place without meeting a soul; we found it utterly deserted, except by a few geese and a tame deer, which were immediately sacrificed for the men's breakfast. On our leaving the place we fired the bungalow. Some of the mounted volunteers went off to another place, a little off the road, belonging to some of Kowar Sing's people, which they burned and plundered. On our return to Jugdespore we found the Sikhs had been very busy looting, at which they are perfect vultures, seeming to scent out where any money or valuables are buried.

[1] Leatherhead, Surrey.

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They began fighting among themselves, and three of them were rather cut about with tulwars. They afterwards made a division of property, and said that they only got Rs. 40, among the 150, but everyone thought they got much more. Rather a bad feeling between the Europeans and the Sikhs. As the former say: "Look how those fellows loot! we get nothing, and had the heaviest work at the fight," which was true enough, for the Sikhs being only a Police Battalion were almost undisciplined, and did not understand the skirmishing. They did not come forward quite as well as could be wished. However, I uphold them, as I have good reason to do, seeing that if they had not proved faithful, I might by this time have been served as we found an unfortunate spy of ours, viz. hung up by the hands, hamstrung, and his throat cut. There is no doubt they are shocking hands at plundering, for whenever they saw a dead Sepoy, they rushed on him and stripped him of his rupees in a twinkling.

. . . . . .

'*August* 15.—Moved out into camp, and made a grand blow up of the principal buildings, and a temple.

'*August* 16.—Marched at daylight through the jungle and rice fields. . . .

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'*August* 19.—The force arrived at Arrah, where we found orders that Major Eyre was at once to go with his guns and the detachment of the 5th to the river, where a steamer was waiting his arrival to take them up country. . . . No orders for the civilians, and as our last were to remain at Arrah, we did not fancy it without any troops, so Wake determined to go in during the night and inquire from the Commissioner what we were to do.

'*August* 20.—Just as Major Eyre got out of the gate with his men, an express came in countermanding the river route, and ordering him to go by land to Buxar, and there await a steamer. I and a few others, though we had only one horse apiece, and the distance is 26 miles, determined to ride to Dinapore for a change. We arrived there about 11 A.M. with the horses almost dead beat. . . . I got another horse lent me, and went on to Patna, and the Farquharsons, neither of whom at first recognised me, as I was so unclean and hairy about the muzzle. A nicely furnished house and well-cooked dinner made an excellent change. Saw Richardson, who is magistrate at Patna. Left the house about ten . . . found my horse, which I rode into Arrah. . . .

'22.—Marched at daylight. From the place

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we were at, it is two marches to Buxar, but some others and I rode the whole way this evening. We found in the fort some of the 90th Foot. . . .

'23.—The troops came in this morning, and some steamers arrived in the evening.

'24.—Said goodbye to the 5th Artillery, and very sorry were we to part, as we had a very jolly time of it together. . . .'

The following is a letter written by Mr. Herwald Wake on August 27th to his mother, giving a brief account of the defence and relief from his own point of view. In it are some sentences which are keenly interesting, as giving a real personal impress to his description of events. For instance, in speaking of a question which must (under such circumstances as those that prevailed during the Indian Mutiny) be always of vital interest for the conscience of man to decide, he says: 'I had made up my mind not to be taken alive, and after a long conversation as to its justifiability, had agreed with another man, that if possible, when we were overpowered, we should shoot each other at the same moment.'

Then again, in connexion with the chase of Koer Singh and his troops through the jungle to Jugdespore, he mentions the feeling which

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must, in some degree, be that of every soldier in his first battle, on the eve of the most momentous discovery—in such case—that could be imagined. Fear, lest one's personality should not come up to the scratch, so to speak, at the most imperative demand of its owner; sheer joy, if it rises to the occasion, and clears its fence careless and regardless of danger. Of what personal confidence can a man be gladder, than that fear prove an absolute stranger to him in the moment of his greatest emergency? I remember talking to a man who served through the war in the Transvaal on this very subject. He said: 'When you hear the whizz of your first bullet in a battle, perhaps you do feel in a cold sweat for a moment, but afterwards you get absolutely careless when they begin to whizz and patter on all sides of you.' Wake, in describing his first battle in the open, says: 'I have been in situations of danger often, but I was curious to know how I should feel in a situation where it was in my power to court or to keep out of it as I chose, and I was glad to find, that when heading one part of a force under a perfect shower of bullets, *my only feeling was one of boisterous happiness*' (the italics are mine), 'verily man is a destroying animal.' And he adds, 'You remember my old doubts as a boy on this subject.'

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Indeed, there must be many of us who can testify to the absolute truth of Wake's feeling of 'boisterous happiness.'[1] What enthusiasm of joy often rises up from the depths of our being when some vital moment of danger and its accompanying excitement calls us urgently into the fray of sudden action. It is the moment in which we taste the thrill of real life. No man can deny this.

'THE FORT, BUXAR,
'SHAHABAD,
'*August* 27.

'MY DARLING MOTHER,

'Thank God I am alive and well, for nothing but His infinite mercy preserved me and my little band not only from death, but from torture and indignities such as have everywhere been practised on officers who have fallen into the hands of the fiends. . . . The whole thing was a miracle; not only had we the three rebel regiments besieging us, but they were joined by the Station Guard of 150 men—numbers of disbanded and furlough Sepoys—and *thousands* of the rebel Baboo Koour Sing's men with guns and matchlocks of every description. Had they

[1] One of the survivors of the Arrah siege tells me that he remembers Wake as 'absolutely fearless, and joyously careering ahead of all.'

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persisted in any one of the plans they formed for our destruction, they must have carried us by assault in ten minutes, but every time we picked off a few of them, what they were doing was abandoned and something else done. They tried to starve us out, burn us out, smoke us out, and blow us up; but the only thing they carried on continually, was the fire night and day from the opposite house, on the top of which they were under cover, and the peppering from the two guns, the shot from which, however, seldom came through our walls. The doors and windows were riddled with shot and bullets, which also came smack into our only living room, and yet, although we killed and wounded a lot of them, we only had one man wounded, and a few scratched and bruised, after a siege of seven entire days and nights; God did indeed "confound our enemies." Of course, when the first attack was made, I did not expect we could possibly beat them off, but after the first twenty-four hours I had every confidence in our making a good fight of it, and when we got to water in our well, had perfect faith in our eventually escaping, as we had fifteen days' grain and flour, and a good deal of ammunition, and kept the Seikhs making cartridges faster than they used them. I had made up my mind not to be

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THE HOUSE AT ARRAH.

From a sketch by Sir Vincent Eyre, 1857.
(By kind permission of Miss Lucy Wake).

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taken alive, and, after a long conversation as to its justifiability, had agreed with another man, that if possible, when we were overpowered, we would shoot each other at the same moment. I was so thankful to hear that both Harry Sitwell and dear Mrs. John Lewis had been in time to write and tell you of our safety, for I could not write in time, and I saw by the papers what sort of news you would get of us, and you must have despaired of our life; and after all the horrors you had heard of, it was dreadful to think what a state of mind you would have been in, especially as being engaged in the second campaign against Koour Sing, at Jugdeespore, I could not write by the next mail again.

'The first relief force sent to help us from Dinapore, consisting of 400 Europeans, 50 Seikhs, heaps of officers, and several civilians and volunteers, fell into an ambush close to the entrance of the town, owing to the officer in command wishing to press on, and thinking every moment was of importance to us. Pressing on in the night, without an advanced guard or skirmishers, they were beaten back with fearful loss—four officers *killed*, all but *one* wounded, one volunteer killed and several wounded, 138 rank and file killed and 50 wounded, being followed up and fired on the whole way of

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the retreat to the boats, while they were swimming a small river—and the wounded killed on the ground by the villagers. After this there was no idea, at Dinapore, of giving us any further assistance; and we were given up as a bad job—very sorry for us, but nothing could be done—pleasant for the wives of three of the party, who were at Dinapore. By-the-bye I had written a letter in French to the commanding officer at Dinapore, telling him I could hold out for some days longer, and could I have got it out of our fort, all that happened would have been avoided. Well, luckily for us, Major Eyre (the Caubul [*sic*] man) arrived at Buxar, on the other side of the district, by steamer, with some guns and 40 European gunners, and taking command of 150 of Her Majesty's 5th Infantry and a few volunteers, and Hastings (a brother of Lord Huntingdon's) and Jackson of the Stud, and Liddall the Vet. and 16 volunteers, started with three of his guns for Arrah. The greater part of the rebel army met them eight miles from Arrah, flushed with their last victory, and thinking they could eat such a little handful. However, they were mistaken, for they got a thundering licking, chiefly owing to Hastings's heroic conduct, in heading a charge at a critical moment, when the guns were nearly surrounded.

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All through the affair Hastings showed himself a trump, and never had anything but a stick in his hand, both in this engagement and in the second at Jugdeespore.[1] The rebels fired so badly, that although the fire was tremendously thick, the loss on our side was trifling. Eyre's force, seeing that the rebels retreated on Arrah, worked all night at bridging a nullah, and crossed the next morning, when they ascertained, beyond a doubt, that Arrah was abandoned. Some of the volunteers then rode on to us with the news, and I jumped on one of their horses, and had the jolliest ride I ever had in my life, to join the force and come in with them. I got a jolly cheer on my appearance, and a basin of the men's soup and a bottle of beer (not before it was wanted), which was a change after parched grain (vetches) and chupatties (damper), and we had uncommon little of them even, and half a tumbler of beer filled up with water, daily; then we marched in and the détenus came out rejoicing.

'The rebel, Koer[2] Sing, and his army, had yet

[1] It will be remembered that in more than one fight Sir James Outram carried nothing but a stick, and though other officers tried to avoid the bullets, he never even ducked his head once, but treated them with supreme unconcern.

[2] Constantly it occurs that the spelling of an Indian word varies, even in the same letter, at this time.

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to be demolished, as I had information that they had retreated on his stronghold at Jugdeespore in the Jungle, and after communication with Dinapore, we got a reinforcement of Her Majesty's 10th Foot, and set out on what was looked on by everybody but our little force as a foolhardy expedition; many of our little garrison who were not obliged to remain, started off to Dinapore to enjoy the sweets of reposing on their laurels; some, however, came with us, and Major Eyre put me in command of my gallant Sikhs. One hundred men of his regiment were also sent to join us, with two officers, so that we mustered 200 strong of all sorts. Everybody but us looked on the expedition as a forlorn one, and the letters one got were like farewells. On the second day's march, just after a halt for a cheroot and a tot of grog all round, about twelve o'clock, our volunteer skirmishers came upon the ambushes of the enemy, and in five minutes we were engaged. We had two hours' jungle fighting, and then we charged and scattered the brutes in every direction, killing and wounding numbers of them, while the loss on our side was trifling. The guns could not act much in the jungle, but they got one dose of grape slap in the middle of them. I was mounted on a little stud mare which I bought on the spot; she carried me over mud walls and ditches, and three times through a small

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river out of her depth, under a heavy fire, all the time as coolly as if nothing was going on out of the way. I have been in situations of danger often, but I was curious to know how I should feel in a situation where it was in my power to court or to keep out of it as I chose, and I was glad to find that, when heading one part of a force under a perfect shower of bullets, my only feeling was one of boisterous happiness—verily man is a destroying animal. Eyre mentions me very handsomely in his despatch.[1] I don't tell you this in the way of boasting, nor for you to talk about, but because you may remember my old doubts as a boy on this subject. The enemy were in such numbers that we must have lost half our force had they fired decently; but they had no officers, and evidently thought more of getting quickly under cover again than taking aim. The greater part, too, that I was exposed to, were armed with the Enfield rifles, which the unfortunate defeated force had lost, and the ammunition cart for which had also fallen into their hands. These they did not know how to use; so that although I was mounted within forty or fifty yards of them, and was recognised and fired at, the greater number of the bullets went

[1] 'Mr. Wake, the magistrate of Arrah, has just ridden into camp. His defence of his house seems to have been almost miraculous.'

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over my head. Two men were struck close to me. When his troops were defeated Koer Sing abandoned his stronghold, and we marched in, finding two guns loaded and pointing down the street. If one of them had had the pluck to stop and fire them there would have been a pretty smash among the advanced guard, as they were round a corner. We took our ease in the Baboo's house for two or three days, hanging all we could lay hands on, and making one expedition with a small force to another house of his, where he was said to be again making a stand; and then we blew up and burnt everything belonging to him, and returned to Arrah, in which place, everything being destroyed, I obtained sanction to temporarily removing the station to Buxar, in the fort of which we are located with 150 Sikhs for the terror of evil-doers; though the rebel chiefs have not left the district, but are hiding in the jungle, most of their troops have left them, and all is at present quiet and likely to remain so. My present worldly possessions are *three shirts, one pair of jack-boots with spurs, two jumpers, three pairs of stockings, two pocket handkerchiefs, two brushes, one toothbrush, three pairs of trousers,* damaged; one *broken dogcart,* and an *old buggy mare*; and a dressing-case, the greater part of the contents of which were unfortunately

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in use at the time of the inroad, and were not saved.

'*Vivat Regina* et *John Company.*

'I have just got your last letter, written in all innocence of anything except the fall of Delhi; by this time you have learnt all the horrors that have followed.

'I came up here in the steamer with General Outram, and made great friends with him, which is rather difficult, as he is not at all a suave old gentleman; but he was delighted with our stand at Arrah, as every other station in Behar had bolted, and we were the only ones that might have done so without shame, for *the whole* of the Sepoys came *here*, and they bolted from what *might* be. The Commissioner who called them in has been removed on the spot from his appointment. I was very lucky in having the lead in everything devolved on me, which was just what I wanted, and as it was successful ought to do me good. . . .

'Your very affectionate Son,

'HERWALD C. WAKE.

'I cannot describe to you the state we were in in the Bungalow of dirt and discomfort; I only once had my clothes off during the siege; and till the well was dug, which was the fourth day, I could allow no water, but a short allowance, to

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drink. The bungalow was only a billiard room, built on arches, the interstices between which we filled up with bricks, *without mortar*, and white-washed outside to look like a real wall, in which we were successful. We ate parched grain till dinner, when we had, alternately, a damper or a little rice for dinner. I was *ravenous* the whole time.

'H. C. W.'

This letter, of course, was written about eight days after the expedition in chase of Koer Singh was brought to a close. Thus, after a campaign of about three weeks, Eyre's forces were withdrawn, and his improvised troops disbanded.

'On the night of August 20, Eyre suddenly awakened from slumber, to find the companions of his recent toils and successes standing round his bed, to offer him the parting tribute of their esteem and gratitude.' Mr. Halls read aloud the verses he had written on the defence of Arrah; and three hearty rounds of cheering brought the interview to an end. And the following day Eyre set out to join Sir James Outram's forces, *en route* for Lucknow.

Sir James Outram, than whom no one was quicker at recognising splendid service in the field, wrote to Sir Vincent Eyre on August 19th: '. . . Your glorious little campaign! what a refreshing

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contrast to the bungling that has prevailed elsewhere! . . . If acts of devotion to one's country entitle to the Cross, then surely the devotion which you displayed at Arrah to your country, and the advantage that resulted to the country from that act, ought to secure it to you of all men.'

Yet the coveted 'V.C.' was never given. Both Havelock and Outram 'repeatedly mentioned' Eyre honourably in their despatches;[1] and Outram called him in one of these, 'the gallant Brigadier Eyre, whose victories at Arrah and Jugdespore have already given him a European reputation.'

Many other instances might be given of Outram's readiness to recognise courageous service in the field. From among them may be chosen the following story (hitherto unpublished), in relation to the relief of Lucknow. It is quoted from a letter to his mother from Captain Stafford Bailey, of General Outram's force, and it is a story of daring pluck and courage.

'We captured the two guns and pushed on again at the "double" under a tremendous fire from the invisible foe, until we were checked by the fire of three guns placed at the bridge. . . . I, from my position, happened to be the first man on the bridge, closely followed by Arnold. I reached

[1] Col. Malleson, *Recreations of an Indian Official.*

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the middle of the bridge, received a shock, and remember no more that occurred until some hours subsequently. A shower of "grape" was poured in over the prostrate upon the leading division. Poor Arnold's leg was broken, . . . the guns captured, and many of the men bayonetted. . . . Afterwards when I was in hospital, Sir James Outram said to me on hearing where I had been hit, "Ah, that bridge affair will be a great credit to you!"'

In a letter to Eyre, written when Arrah siege, and Koer Singh, were things of the past, Outram speaks very warmly of his services: 'I avail myself of one of the few leisure moments allowed me, to thank you for the able, zealous, and invaluable service you have rendered me; to give utterance to the strong feeling of admiration with which I regard you as a man, a soldier, and an officer; and to assure you of the warm affection I bear to you as a friend. Your future career I shall continue to watch with deep and affectionate interest, and if at any time, or in any manner, I can be of the slightest service to you, I shall esteem it alike a personal favour and an honour to be permitted to aid you. But you are now far above the necessity for help from anyone, for you have well and fairly earned the higher position the Service affords, and doubtless will obtain it when opportunity offers.'

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Nevertheless, the fact remains, that Sir Vincent Eyre's 'active services in the field' ended here. He was made, later, Inspector-General of Ordnance in Calcutta, (and in 1868 retired 'on full pay retired list' as Major-General). Still all his friends felt that there were other fields of glory; higher levels of achievement which should have been his. Many could easily have filled the post of Inspector-General of Ordnance, but only now and then are leaders of men born, like Moses of old, who, by the mere uplifting of inspiring hands, by the strenuous vigour of a silent, powerful appeal, prevailed, on behalf of his people, against the fierce hosts of the children of Amalek. And such an one for the relief of Arrah was Vincent Eyre, who with his handful of men drove back a force of more than twenty times their number.

Eyre was 'recommended by Sir Hugh Rose to the Home Government for further honours,' so states Colonel Malleson in his 'Recreations of an Indian Official,' and he goes on to say some very strong words in connexion with that Government's strange neglect of some of those who have served their country best—words which will strike those who read them as regrettably true, and by no means too strong: 'England indeed sometimes acts strangely in such cases. She makes heroes of officers who leave their post

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during an action; she bestows prize-money upon men who were hundreds of miles from the place of capture, whilst those by whose daring efforts and brilliant victories in the vicinity, that capture was made possible, are left unrewarded. She showers with an indiscriminate hand, crosses and decorations; whilst an action, which in any other country in the world would have raised the originator to high command and great honours, which in France was regarded as *the* brilliant action of the mutiny campaign, is in England rewarded with a decoration such as is ordinarily given to military men for the most ordinary services. . . .'

It will never be forgotten that it was Vincent Eyre who first dealt the most fatal and deadly blow to the rebellion, 'at whose hands the mutineers first received a retribution as prompt as it was effective. . . . Looking at men as they are, we may well assert that there are very few who would have taken upon themselves the responsibility at which Eyre so eagerly clutched. There was no tarrying, no delay, no telegraphing for instructions, no sheltering himself under the wing of others. . . . For, however much . . . some people may be inclined to undervalue the effect of the great success of Arrah, this we know for a fact, that at the time it was regarded as the turning

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SURGEON-GENERAL SIR JAMES THORNTON, K.C.B.

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point of the Mutiny, as the death-blow to rebellion in Behar, as so strengthening the hands of the Government as to enable it to turn its undivided attention to affairs in the North-West. What if Eyre had not succeeded? Where then would have been Havelock? Where the beleaguered garrison of Lucknow? In what a position would have been the Commander-in-Chief, with the whole country between Allahabad and Calcutta in insurrection? Who can doubt that Ghazipur would have gone, that Patna would have gone? that Calcutta itself would have been sorely threatened?'. . . It needed for such an expedition a leader . . . who was cool, determined, resolute; who possessed the brain to contrive, the nerve to carry out, his daring plans. Such leaders are rarely met with now-a-days—but such an one the Arrah field force possessed in Vincent Eyre. . . .'

But it is not only Colonel Malleson who speaks strongly of this neglect of the English Government with regard to some of her Indian Civil Service officials, and some of her officers; Sir Evelyn Wood (in his book quoted earlier) thus alludes to it:—

'None of the subordinates, either L'Estrange, who led the undaunted Fusiliers, nor Captain Hastings, who had collected the transport for the march, nor Mr. Kelly, the heroic civilian, were

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rewarded; and but for an accidental meeting with Sir Hugh Rose, *Eyre would have been forgotten*, since the incapable general of Danapur was soon afterwards dismissed from his post, and the services of those who worked under him were disregarded.'

And Sir J. Howard Thornton,[1] in his 'Memories of Seven Campaigns,' says: 'Speaking of the defence and relief of Arrah, strange to say, nothing has ever been done for the force that so gallantly saved them, though a clasp might well have been granted to signalise a victory, which not only rescued the garrison of Arrah, but crushed the rebellion in the province of Behar.'

The *Daily News* of January 22, 1858, of which I have seen a copy, said: 'The country rings with the well-earned praises of Inglis and his heroic garrison; Wake's defence of the Arrah bungalow was in every respect a miniature edition of Lucknow. The same stake—the same similar odds—equal pluck—a like issue.'

In the article entitled 'The Havelocks of the Civil Service' in the *Homeward Mail*, of October 16, 1857, mention is made of Sir John Lawrence, Sir Bartle Frere, Mr. Robert Tucker, Mr. Ross Mangles, and Mr. Wake, 'whose defence of Arrah Sir Vincent Eyre called miraculous.'

[1] Who came to Arrah with Sir Vincent Eyre's relief force.

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THE MAGISTRATE OF GHAZIPUR; AND HOW HE HELPED FORWARD THE RELIEF OF ARRAH

A MAN landed in India in the early months of the Mutiny year—1857—who, in his capacity of magistrate of Ghazipur, was to be of great service in the expedition to Arrah, as well as a steady, calming influence in his own district.

John Henry Bax (afterwards Bax-Ironside) was about twenty-nine at this time, having been born in December 1827. He was the eldest son of Mr. John Bax, of the Bombay Civil Service, who had served in India for about twenty years. He was President of Indore,[1] head of the East India Company, and the first Englishman who ever rode through Persia.

The name 'Bax' is of Dutch origin; and the ancestors of Mr. Bax came over to England with William of Orange. Ralph and Marcellus Bax were knighted on the field of battle, and

[1] The Mahratta principality, comprising territories of the Holkar dynasty.

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mention is made of them in Motley's 'United Netherlands.'

John Bax—father of John Henry Bax—married a Miss Ironside, of Houghton-le-Spring, who was descended from King Edmund Ironside. She made over the Houghton property to her son (during her widowhood), on the condition that he should take her father's name of 'Ironside.' This he did in 1866,[1] amalgamating the coats of arms, which are now held by the family by letters patent, obtained by the payment of several hundreds of pounds. The younger branches of the family have since called themselves 'Ironside Bax.'

He was at Eton in 1843, under the head-mastership of Dr. Hodgson. In the records to which I have had access, there is an Indenture between 'John Bax of 43 Wimpole Street, and the East India Co.', in which mention is made of the appointment of John Henry Bax, now 19, to be a member of the Civil Service in Bengal. He went out to India, by the overland route, on November 20, 1847.

[1] In the *London Gazette* of October 19, 1866, there was a notice that the Queen had been pleased to grant 'Her Royal Licence and authority' that John Henry Bax and 'his issue may from June, 1866, take and henceforth use the surname of Ironside, in addition to and after that of Bax, that he and they may bear the arms of Ironside with those of Bax.'

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In November 1849 to November 1852, he came back to Europe on sick furlough. Indeed, there is no mention of his return to his work in India until February 1853, when he went to Mirzapoor, on being appointed to the Benares division.

In 1856 he was in England again, and his marriage took place in London towards the end of that year. He married the daughter of General Bulkeley Hughes, of Plas Goch, a very old Welsh family, and when he went back to India in January 1857, he took his wife with him. The first week in June is mentioned in his diary, as one in which mutinies are occurring all round Ghazipur. Apparently by now, he had been appointed magistrate at the district of which Ghazipur is centre. Then on the 7th there was a panic in the station of Ghazipur—happily, however, it proved to be groundless. Nevertheless 'all the ladies and most of the gentlemen went on board a steamer lying off the shore.'[1] Two days later Bax went with fifty Sepoys and a few Sowars to restore order in the district. This proved to be a wise decision on his part, as he mentions that his expedition had had a good effect on the country in general, for before it there had been numerous

[1] Diary of John Henry Bax.

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gang robberies, murders, &c., and everywhere disorder reigned.

On July 4, finding that the force under his command was not to be depended on, he asked for reinforcements; and there were sent two days later, forty-five soldiers of the 64th Foot, and two officers. The next day the expedition set out, and a village in which insubordination had been rife was attacked, the mutineers dispersed, and order restored. Then on 25th came the news of the mutiny of the three Sepoy regiments at Dinapore, and their march to Arrah.

Mr. Bax thus mentions his own share in the expedition under Sir Vincent Eyre, which set out on the 30th instant:—

'29.—Left Ghazeepoor with twenty-five Highlanders of the 78th, and three guns of Major Eyre's Battery, with an appropriate number of artillerymen, in the steamer *Lady Blackwell*, and arrived at Buxar at 9 P.M. . . .

'30.—Went on shore and preparations were made for our march to Arrah to relieve the garrison there, invested by the Mutineers of the Dinapore Regiments. . . . We marched all night, a weary, uncomfortable, and troublesome journey, twelve hours on foot.'

The letters which follow were written to his

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wife by Mr. Bax during the expedition of which his diary has been speaking, and the first of them was written on 30th instant.

'BUXAR, *July 30/57.*

'2 P.M.

'. . . The post goes at four, but as we are all busy for our start I sit down and write at once. We shall not be back, deary, for 4 or 5 days, as we must go and relieve the poor people shut up in Arrah, though I am afraid there is little hope of saving them. . . . Our force musters 150 of the 5th (Fusiliers), 40 artillerymen, and three guns, two nine-pounders and a howitzer, beside some 20 volunteer cavalry; so we are well backed up, and are confident of success. . . . There is no danger at hand, the country here being perfectly quiet . . . but these are troublous times, and the storm is bursting all round. . . . I do not expect to get to Arrah till the third day. And if we manage it, we intend to let the steamer drop down and fetch us up and go straight back to Ghazeepoor. . . .

. . . . . .

'The accounts last received from Arrah are not favourable to the authorities shut up in the Collector's Kutcherry, and we very much fear

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that some, if not a great many, are killed, there were twelve in all, and fifty Sikhs, who were all doing their best to save themselves, but no assistance was at hand. Chuprah is deserted by the authorities. . . . I am still very anxious about you, deary, at Ghazeepoor. . . . I depend on your good sense to view the matter in a calm religious manner. . . . I am in great hopes that the Patna commissioner[1] has already made arrangements to relieve me. . . . I go forth with a firm trust in God, and a knowledge that I am doing my duty.'

On August 1st he wrote from 'Zillah Arrah,' eighteen miles from the station. . . .

. . . . . .

'We have not heard from Dinapore in answer to a letter we sent in a steamer. . . . Major Eyre is an old experienced artillery officer, and there are six officers of the 5th Fusiliers, besides many volunteers. . . . We have found everything quiet; some of the villages have been looted around, and are still in great fear. . . .'

His diary for this date contains the news that he has but just heard of the fate of the unfortunate expedition under Captain Dunbar: 'Heard of the mutiny of the 12th Irregulars, and of the murder of Major Holmes and his wife, &c.; and also of

[1] Mr. William Tayler.

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the fate of the luckless detachment of the 10th and 37th Foot sent from Dinapore to relieve the Arrah garrison. . . . The detachment was commanded by Capt. Dunbar of the 10th, who displayed singular want of judgment in his proceedings.' The next day's account is, of course, entirely concerned with his description of the fight at close quarters with the enemy—the fight which settled the fate of Arrah station.

'Marched at 4 A.M., and about half-past six came in sight of the enemy, unexpectedly both for them and us. A very large tope of trees separated us from them, while we were flanked by wooded country on both sides. A village lay to the right of the tope, into which we opened our guns. The enemy, under cover of the woods, opened upon us with musketry at a distance of 100 yards, and began to surround us on all sides, firing from every quarter. After a short delay, we determined to clear the woods and get into the open country beyond, which we did at the point of the bayonet under cover of the guns. We had only about four wounded here. Pushing on, the enemy closed in on our rear, and we lost two of our elephants with baggage. . . . The number of the enemy being computed (and afterwards affirmed) at the time to be between

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4000 and 5000 of all sorts . . . We halted at 10 A.M. in a small tope of trees on the road. . . . We here buried one of the 5th who had died of cholera. . . . We commenced our march at noon, making a flank movement to the right skirting the nullah,[1] intending to cross it at the railway, where we expected to find a bridge. On our way we were continually fired upon. Proceeding about two miles, we arrived at a tope of trees, in front of which was a brick-kiln, and plenty of bricks heaped up. The railway embankment was on our right. On the left and in front, the country was very wooded. We here made a stand and planted our guns, and acted solely on the defensive, for the firing of the enemy was very continuous and heavy. Their bugles sounded frequently for the charge, and they were evidently closing in upon our little band. After being nearly an hour here, it was thought better to make a charge with the bayonet. The 5th rallied, the guns were limbered up, the baggage collected. The volunteers were ready and a charge was made in earnest. The enemy at once fled, and we gained the open country, our loss being two artillerymen killed, and thirteen wounded, both of the artillery and of the 5th. One officer (Oldfield)

[1] 'Nullah,' river.

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was wounded. . . . Having gained the open country out of shot, we were unmolested until we pulled up at a bridge. . . . A few shots from a house across the nullah were fired into us, but we took no notice of this. We were engaged at night in repairing the bridge. We were about four miles from Arrah, and expected to be attacked during the night.' The next day's entry states that at 3 A.M. news was received that 'the Arrah people were all right, and that the Sepoys had left the place.' Later, after Mr. Wake had ridden into camp, the march was made into Arrah. 'The house in which they fortified themselves was riddled with balls. . . . dead carcases of horses and Sepoys were lying about impregnating the air with putrid odours. . . . We hung several wounded Sepoys, and those who had taken service under Koowar Singh. . . . The defence altogether was most gallant. The enemy opposed to us during our engagement were armed with the Enfield rifles which they had taken from the Europeans of the ill-fated expedition under Capt. Dunbar. . . . As soon as the rebels had dispersed the villagers came immediately to our assistance.'

In a letter to his wife, describing the day's fighting, he says: 'The bullets actually were as

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thick and close as rain, and how we were not all killed is a miracle. The rebels were at one time within sixty yards of the guns. . . . At one time I thought that I should not see you again. There were thousands against us, and many armed with the rifles which they had taken from the Europeans killed of the party from Dinapore. 350 men were sent and 150 (!) killed. So the Patna commissioner writes me in a letter this morning, and therefore true and authentic. . . . The villagers all round are crowding to assist us now the rebels have gone.'

On the 4th Bax wrote in his diary: 'Rode out in the afternoon beyond Arrah ¼-mile, the scene of the engagement and ambuscade of the Sepoys. It was a melancholy sight. Numerous accoutrements of European soldiers were lying about. Bodies half-buried or eaten up. Ropes pending from trees, showing how many had been hung. Shakos lying about in every direction. . . . It was certainly the most insane step that could have been taken, for the country was thickly wooded. It was quite dark, and yet they continued their march, thinking, I suppose, that three entire regiments well armed would flee at the approach of 350 men of the Europeans. Out of the whole number, only fourteen returned to Dinapore *untouched*.'

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The letter from the Commissioner of Patna, to which Bax refers, is one which might have gravely affected the fortunes of the English Empire. It just missed being a letter of tremendous moment. It was sent to stop the relief expedition to Arrah, under Sir Vincent Eyre.

Had it reached Bax in time, the expedition would, in all probability, never have started. And had it not started, it is impossible to conceive what our position in India to-day would have been, or whether we should have had a position there at all.

But something which the world calls Fate, but which Christians call the Hand of God, prevented that letter arriving when it was meant to arrive, and Arrah was saved. It is necessary to remember, while reading the following, that William Tayler, Commissioner of Patna, had long given up all hope of the Arrah garrison being still alive, his own confident belief being that their defence against such overpowering numbers of the enemy was an absolutely impossible feat.

'PATNA,

'*July 30.*

'MY DEAR SIR,

'I have just received your letter of this date. I regret extremely to state that the force

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despatched to relieve Arrah has been defeated, and driven back with great loss in men and officers.

'Under these circumstances, it would be very unwise to march with so small a force as 150 men and three guns. The rebels are in great force, having been, as it is supposed, joined by some companies of the 25th N.I., with a supply of ammunition.

'We are about here to occupy a military pontine at Dinapore, and the object will be to concentrate as many steamers and troops as possible, and, when strong enough, strike an effective blow at the enemy.

'I now send your letter to the general, and if he approves the idea, I would suggest that you come down to Dinapore with the troops and guns, where, if more come, we may be able to act effectively. If he does not, I have requested him to add to this note whatever he may advise. Another unsuccessful attempt would be productive of the worst consequences.

'When next we strike we must hit hard or not at all.

'Yours sincerely,

'W. TAYLER.

'N.B.—The force that marched to relieve the

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Arrah garrison consisted of 350 Europeans and 60 Sikhs; 150 Europeans have been killed, and there is scarcely a man not hurt. 28 Sikhs were killed.'

From this letter it seems that the first expedition really suffered far more than other accounts led one to believe: '*there is scarcely a man not hurt.*' Toll was taken, practically, from every single man of the party.

On the back of the letter from Tayler is written: 'This is the original letter sent to me by Mr. Tayler, Commissioner of Patna. It reached me just after we had successfully engaged and defeated the enemy, which the letter warned us to avoid. There is no telling what would have been the consequences to the whole of Tirhoot, Behar, Ghazipur, &c., if the letter had reached us before we went into action.

'J. BAX-IRONSIDE.'

Mr. Bax's diary for 5th and 6th August contains these words: 'Remained at Arrah. . . . The sick and wounded, with a few of the Arrah people, were sent into Dinapore. News was brought of a rising at Gija.' On the 7th inst. he and his servant left Arrah, and reached the

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Ganges at noon. Here they found 150 Sikhs under the command of McDonell, who had shown such pluck and promptitude in saving life during the retreat and defeat of the first expedition to Arrah. They had come to punish a village for having ill-treated the Europeans at that time.

In a letter to his wife, dated August 6th, he writes: 'Koor Singh is at Jugdespoor. One regiment has deserted him, and two are still with him. . . . They have no guns and are short of caps. Koor Singh is fishing about for assistance . . . he is very short of money, and is letting the Sepoys loot his own villages for money.' This in itself reveals, more than anything else, to what a strait he had come; for hitherto he had been very popular with his people, and had really done a great deal at one time to deserve their respect and affection.

'The field force here, after having been reinforced by 100 Sikhs from Buxar, is going on to Jugdespoor, and thence, if all is well, to protect the Trunk Road. . . . I think Koor Singh has no object but to retain Arrah.'

On the 8th, when he was on board the steamer off Bulliah, on his way back to Ghazipur, his last letter to his wife was written.

'You will be glad to hear of . . . our safe

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return. I was on horseback without intermission (except for half-an-hour), from 3 A.M. to 2 P.M.—eleven hours. So you may fancy I am rather sleepy, but am holding out against it. I shall be with you to-morrow morning. . . .'

On the 10th inst. he reached Ghazipur at mid-day. In his diary for this day there is this brief entry: 'Reached Ghazeepoor at 2 P.M. *and disarmed the* 65*th .N.I.* Nothing of any local importance from this time up to about the 27th. Delhi still remained in the hands of the rebels. The Lucknow people were still besieged.' No one would guess from the short sentence above what had really occurred; but I am informed by his daughter that, when the mutineers broke loose, he went amongst them, unarmed, and ordered them to lay down their arms. Bax had a great deal of quiet dignity which enforced obedience, and a steady, self-controlled manner; consequently the arms were all piled up before him without demur, and an outbreak was thus averted.

There are a few men and women in the world to whom the blasts of their own trumpet are *not* music. There are a few even, so used to thinking nothing of their own achievements, that an action such as that just related, needing great pluck, self-control, and promptitude, is not recognised by

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themselves as anything out of the common. There are a few whose religion backs them up so unfalteringly that duty alone is the thing worth considering, and the fact of whether their action wins public approbation, or whether their own life is the forfeit, are things absolutely beside the mark. Among these few was John Henry Bax, magistrate of Ghazipur.[1]

The disarming had to be done. That was all that mattered: and he faced the rebels—unarmed—and that something which in a man's real self comes to the front in these crucial moments, had its effect on the mutineers, and they did what they were told to do at once, unhesitatingly.

On October 1st Bax was appointed by Mr. J. P. Grant, Lieut.-Governor, to be Superintendent of Supplies for Troops on the Grand Trunk Road, and was given as well, 'powers of Collector and Magistrate in the districts of Benares, Mirzapoor, Allahabad and Futtehpore.' But he was obliged to decline, as he had been ill with fever since his return from Arrah, and was not able to stand the exposure and fatigue which such a post would have entailed.

And now it is necessary to say a few words

[1] One of those besieged at Arrah tells me he knew Mr. Bax as 'quiet and pleasant,' not very strong in health, but with determination marked on his face.

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about two men whose strong characters influenced all—both Europeans and natives—with whom they came in contact at this time: Mr. Henry Carre Tucker, Commissioner, and Frederick Gubbins, Judge, of Benares. Colonel Malleson tells us that Mr. Gubbins had acquired, by a grand display of energy in a local crisis, an immense ascendency over the minds of the people. Lord Canning also was strongly impressed by his abilities. Mr. Carre Tucker[1] had thus written to him with regard to Gubbins: 'He is a very superior man . . . feel very thankful to have such a coadjutor to make up for my own great deficiencies. . . . He is carrying on the work in this district most energetically. Under the blessing of Providence he has been the means of securing great peace and quiet in the city and neighbourhood.' Mr. Carre Tucker had such perfect confidence that his work, carried on as he believed a Christian should carry it on, was blessed by Heaven, that he persisted in despising 'all human means of defence.' He even went so far as to say that to take precautions of the sort was in point of fact a want of faith.[2] He wrote to Lord Canning: 'Rather against my wish,

[1] Mr. Tucker was in great measure a fanatic and full of faith, and no doubt was much respected by the Hindus of Benares. But in worldly matters for his country he was most practically minded, ready to help with all his might, and to encourage others to do so.

[2] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny*.

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but by advice of Messrs. Gubbins and Lind' (magistrate of Benares), 'and at the entreaty of European residents, arms and ammunition have been issued out to all who require them.' For himself, he had often declared that in case of an attack by the rebels, he 'would go out to meet them with a Bible.' Every evening he rode out in the most exposed parts of the city, with no escort. He did not own a single weapon of any description with which to defend himself if need were, except a 'heavy-handled riding whip.'

There are extant some little drab-covered volumes containing the demi-official correspondence of Mr. Carre Tucker and Mr. F. B. Gubbins with Mr. Bax, dating from October 1857 to 1859. What I can see of the remains of these volumes somehow gives me the impression that Mr. Carre Tucker's talents did *not* lie in a literary direction. But there are not many remains, for his and Mr. Gubbins' letters are bound up between the cut out leaves of the former's 'Brief History of the Jews, from the Time of Abraham to the Last Rebellion under the Emperor Adrian.' This work, I see by the title-page, was published by the Calcutta Christian Tract and Book Society in 1857.

And instead of being any longer a 'Brief History of the Jews,' in the case of one volume

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at least, it became a history of Indian bullocks, as nearly all the letters in it were concerned with that subject, and with the impossibility of 'manufacturing them when they do not exist'!

I have mentioned before that Bax was very modest as regarded his own abilities; the following quotation from one of Mr. Carre Tucker's letters to him will not, therefore, be out of place here. It is written from Benares, dated October 17, 1857. He begins by saying:—

'I believe you have kept very much in the background, and that your modesty has prevented you receiving the credit to which you are fairly entitled . . .' and he urges him to 'distinguish' himself. The next letter, of about a week later, is a very characteristic one, and one of its sentences, 'Do what has to be done yourself, and then it *will* be done, and no mistake,' gives perhaps as good a key as any to the strenuous, forceful personality behind the pen.

'. . . Never forget that my motto is "Nil desperandum." . . . There are few such things as insurmountable difficulties. . . . Do what has to be done yourself, and then it will be done, and no mistake. . . . Start off wheel-making at once. . . . I received an indent from Government for 400 carts to be ready for a column on the 25th. To

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meet this I have 515 carts, it is true, but only 353 pairs of bullocks.

'Bullocks are *my* great difficulty. I can make carts, but I cannot manufacture bullocks when they do not exist. . . . Cattle fit for carts we *must* have by the hundred.

'If you can send over 500 pairs . . . do so *sharp*. We look to you for cattle, so you must not disappoint us. Nothing is impossible. Don't have such a word in your Dictionary. Just remember that 24,000 men, with an incredible amount of ordnance and commissariat stores *must* be passed up to the N.W. to restore our Empire. So just make up your mind to send me 1000 carts and bullocks, with at least 500 extra pairs of bullocks for our Benares carts, as quick as lightning. . . . The thing must be done, unless you wish to see some thousands of English troops kicking their heels here, while urgently wanted elsewhere. . . .' He goes on to say: '*Do not fail us in this job*. . . . The efficient performance of this job will be one mode of *distinguishing yourself peculiarly acceptable to Mr. Grant*.'

In one of his later letters to Bax, he says: 'I think your part in the Arrah affair is little known.' And I cannot help quoting here Frederick Gubbins' stray words to the same effect sent to his

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chief: 'I would in the Ghazeepoor District particularly notice the conduct of Mr. J. Bax (Ironside), the Joint Magistrate who accompanied Major V. Eyre to Arrah in perhaps the most brilliant passage of arms that has been witnessed on this side of India during the rebellion.'

In the letter from Mr. Carre Tucker from which I am now going to quote, he gives a salutary warning as regards the lesson Englishmen should have learnt by the mutiny, if they do not want the 'next row to be infinitely worse'—a warning which is one we at the present day should do well to lay to heart more than we do: 'February 28, 1858. . . . Thanks for your very kind and friendly note of Farewell. . . . I feel myself more and more drawn to the Religious point of view. The great problem at present is to bring the stray Christian feeling of the English middle classes to bear intelligently upon the Government and the administration of affairs here. . . . We must try to make all the Christians in India worthy of the name, if we hope to retain God's blessing.

'If we do not take warning by this mutiny, *depend upon it the next row will be infinitely worse.*'

In 1860 Mr. Bax was awarded a medal by the Home Department of the Indian Government,

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for 'general distinguished service during the Mutiny'; and later on appointed, by Royal Warrant, 'a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath.'

In 1862 he was in office at Benares, and winning high praise from the Judge there. In 1867 he was appointed to Agra, and did valuable service as Civil and Sessions Judge there. From this post he retired in 1871.[1] After his return to England, he suffered a great deal from ill health, and the doctors considered that his death in 1879 was largely due to overwork, and the effect of the climate, while he was in India. He was only fifty-two at the time of his death.

Bax was a great rider and keen sportsman; an unfailing shot where leopards and tigers were concerned. In one of his shooting expeditions his gun brought down a large man-eating tiger which had just eaten thirteen postmen! So that probably many letters went astray at that time.

[1] A long address was delivered to him on leaving, from his court officials, in which these words occurred: 'You have ever listened patiently to all arguments addressed in the Court of pleading, and have protected the just rights of Clients, while at the same time you have educated the Bar.'

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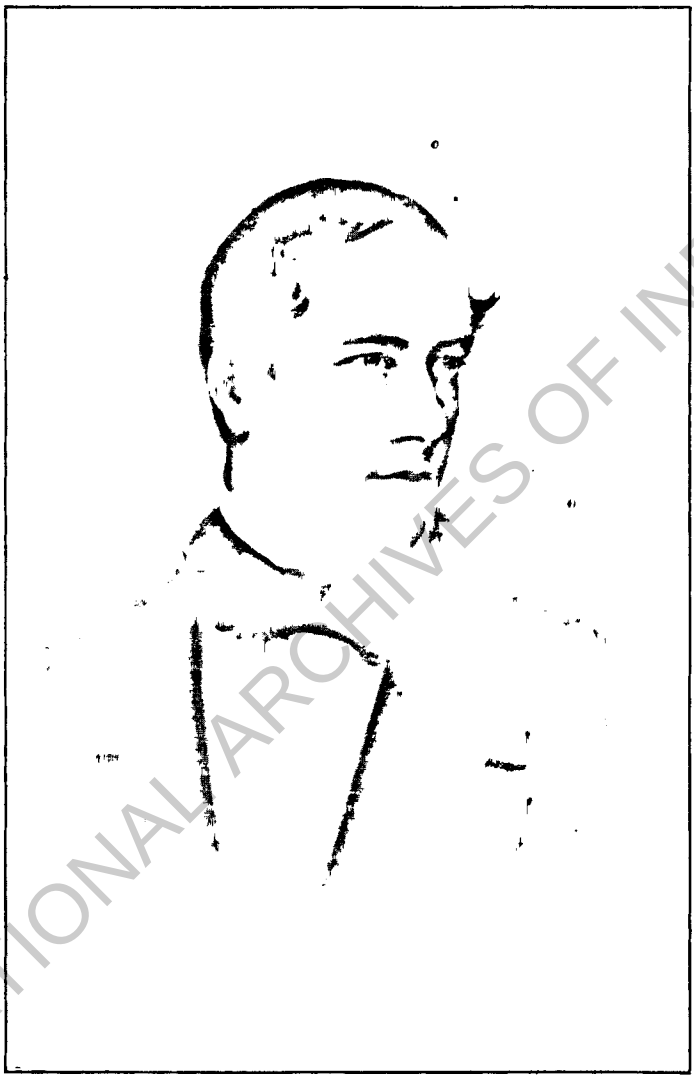

BRIGADIER-GENERAL NICHOLSON.

From a lithograph by Baignet.

By kind permission of Dr. Theodore Maxwell, his nephew.

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LETTERS FROM JOHN NICHOLSON AND OTHERS

THE name of John Nicholson is one that rings through the hearts of many a man and woman in England to-day. Though it is more than fifty years ago since the man who bore it died splendidly, while leading on his troops at the storming of Delhi during the Indian Mutiny, yet because of the magnificent strength and consistency of his character, it stands as a watchword for all ages, as long as England is still England.

For what was it that was so compelling about Nicholson's individuality? Before all things it was its power, its rare unselfishness. His greatest friend, Sir Herbert Edwardes, speaks of these 'two phases of his character: the power of his public, the tenderness of his private life.' Individual power is the most compelling force of all. To be strong and consistent are qualities none too common. Some of us can be strong, splendidly, brilliantly, strong on occasion, but there are very few who can be both continuously. For most

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men have their weak times—times when they break away from their moorings, and are well aware they are neither strong nor consistent, but lamentably, contemptibly weak. It may be their friends do not outwardly subscribe to the fact that they have failed, but none the less, the subconscious self in each man of them has, with inexorable pen, registered the temporary break in the continuity of the character. It may be their friends find their love no whit diminished by this break, for there is no doubt whatever, that there is incalculable charm in brilliancy, in spontaneity, in passion. Yes, but there comes sooner or later a turn in the tide, a time when the wind drops and the sails flap idly, and the buoyancy of swinging freely before the wind of a brilliant wit, on the tide of a wonderful charm of personality, is exchanged for a sudden stagnation when conditions alter, and then—*then* it is that the value of an absolute unchanging strength and consistency of character is felt most absolutely. John Nicholson was like a rock against which tides had no effect. He was not perhaps always popular among his brother officers; he was too taciturn, quiet and reserved. He was not a brilliant talker, he was not a brilliant writer. But he was a strong *doer*, and that fact saved India to us in the fifty-years-ago time when we so nearly lost her.

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THE MOTHER OF JOHN NICHOLSON.

(Taken for him before the Mutiny as a double Daguerrotype).

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These letters have been quoted from by Colonel Trotter in his 'Life of John Nicholson,' but they have never before been given *in toto*, and they are well worth reading as a whole. I am indebted for the possibility of offering them to the public now, to the great kindness of my friend Dr. Theodore Maxwell, of Woolwich Common, nephew of John Nicholson.

John Nicholson never fulfilled what so many people regard as one of the great objects of existence! He never married. There are those among us who hold that there are natures whom a strong friendship with a man, can so satisfy that they ask no more, but with many of us men it is difficult to forgo *women's* friendship and love. It may be that Nicholson was one of those who could forgo it. His mother was his greatest friend. To those who read his letters and can construe them with inward perception, it is clear that his mother stayed in the same place in his thoughts out in India as she had done while he was in England. His own points of view remained the same, there, as here. To travel, and yet mentally to keep in sight of home bearings is rare. Nicholson was rare in this, as he was rare in force of character and consistency; as he was rare in his faithful *friendship* with his mother.

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The earliest letter to which I have access is one from Mrs. Nicholson to her son John. He was at school at Dungannon, County Tyrone, where he had been sent in his twelfth year. This letter was written when the boy was fifteen, and evidently he had overstepped his weekly allowance, for his mother (though she asks the head-master to supply him with the necessary 10*s.*) enjoins on her son the necessity of, in future, being content with the weekly sum allowed him. It is clear, I think, for many reasons, that John Nicholson took this letter of his mother's to heart; at any rate his after character showed that he had carried her words as the breastplate of his character as regards 'gaining an honourable independence hereafter,' and being 'afraid of nothing.'

To whom can we point as being more splendidly 'afraid of nothing' more surely than to the hero of Delhi?

In the hands of the Mother is the building of the ship of character upon which her son puts to sea for his life's voyage. It is true that it often happens that a good but weak mother proves but a poor ship's carpenter, and her son meets with shipwreck on the high seas; but it is also equally true that every really great man has had the planks of his character's

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ship well and truly laid by God's architect for the family—a good and broad-minded mother.

To John Nicholson.

'*April* 24, 1837.

'MY DEAREST CHILD,

'I would have *met* your wishes and answered your last letter immediately, but have had a return of the pain in my side, which (while it continues) quite prevents me using my right arm. . . . I rather think you misunderstood your uncle, nor would I *write* to him, as I know he is living *too fast*, and finds it enough to meet his own expenses. Should he remember, well and good, but on no account *whatever* would I expose myself to the imputation of being *covetous*. I will, for *this time*, give you the money you require. In *future* you must be content with your weekly allowance. What other Boys have or do, cannot be a rule for *you*, who are the son of a Widow, with five Boys to educate. Do not then, John, feel any false shame at not having money; such a feeling might lead to SERIOUS ILL-CONSEQUENCES.

'Say honestly, openly, you can't afford such or such a thing as may be proposed. I feel no shame at saying I can't afford to enter into the same expenses as Mrs. Scott or Mrs. Cleaver

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do. I want *you* to be an open, manly character, *afraid of nothing* but of doing what is wrong. You will, if you are *diligent* in your studies now, have the opportunity of gaining an honourable independence hereafter. In the meantime you must endeavour to acquire good principles, good habits, and a sufficient degree of knowledge and information to carry you respectably through life, and ever bear in mind that without a good character, education cannot serve you. Mr. Ormsby told us in his sermon last night, that if we *prayed* as we *ought*, we would strive to live as we prayed. Think of this, dearest, and ask yourself, how do I pray?

. . . . . .

'Your Sisters and Brothers unite in love with, dearest John, your own Mamma,

'C. NICHOLSON.'

From John Nicholson to his Mother.

'LECROLE,
'*October* 13, 1839.

'MY DEAR MOTHER,

'I believe I mentioned to you in my last letter from Calcutta that I was appointed to do duty with the 41st Native Infantry at Benares. I left Calcutta on the 12th of August,

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and in three weeks I arrived at Benares. Mr. Dickens, the gentleman I was staying with in Calcutta, gave me a letter of introduction to a Dr. Lindesay, Civil Surgeon here, and I remained with him for three weeks, and then removed into a bungalow within cantonments, and I have been living here all alone for the last four weeks, which is not the most agreeable thing in the world when you have servants who cannot speak one word of English, and you yourself are master of about fifty. I should have written to you by the last overland, which left about a fortnight ago, but I was laid up with a severe bilious attack (the only one I have had) and unable to write. I do not know what I should have done, had not Uncle Richardson most luckily happened to be in Benares at the time, and he very kindly came over very often and saw I had everything I required. He has made me a present of a horse. Uncle James told me I should not keep a horse for the first three or four years, now I could not do without one. A civilian might, but I could not walk about in the sun to court-martials, parades, &c. &c.

'Perhaps you would like to hear how I am getting on, so I will tell you. I pay forty rupees a month for my bungalow, thirty for food, forty-five for servants (I am obliged to

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keep nine of them), seventeen to military funds, seven for my horse's food, and twelve for all. Then there are clothing, postage, and other minor expenses. I am now living within my pay and can do it easily, but I am not yet permanently posted, and I may be ordered to-morrow to go and join a corps some hundreds of miles up country; then I have to buy a tent, to hire camels, &c., so that if I was to remain always in one station I could have money, but I must incur these expenses. A tent costs 400 rupees, which it would take me a year to save up. If I am ordered to march to-morrow, I have not 400 rupees to buy one (a camel), for I have been only two months receiving pay; however, I am very well off and have no reason to complain, on the contrary, I am thankful for having got such a good appointment. I am getting very steady, and I am beginning to learn the language. When you write will you give me a full account of how everything goes on at home, and how you are and the children. . . .

'You will be glad to hear that in consequence of some new Regiments going to be formed, it is not improbable I shall get my Lieutenancy in twelve months. I go to Church every Sunday, and read my Chapter every day as you advised me. . . .

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'I would give anything to have learnt French instead of Latin or Greek. . . . I often, when I am sitting alone here in the evenings, think of you all at home, and say to myself, there is no place like *home*. . . .

'Believe me, your truly (*sic*)

'SON JOHN.'

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'FEROZEPORE,
'*March* 30, 1840.

'MY DEAR MOTHER,

'In my last letter from Benares I mentioned to you that I had been posted to the 27th Regiment N.I. stationed at Ferozepore, and I am happy to say I arrived here safely this day week after a march of nearly three months from Benares. I deferred writing for a few days till I could give you some account of the place, my new regiment and brother officers. First, as to the place, I do not like it. Orders have never been given for forming a station at Ferozepore. It was only last year, when the army was on its march towards Cabul, that three regiments were desired to provide themselves with winter huts. The 27th was one of these, and officers and men immediately commenced making some kind

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of habitable buildings, but from the haste with which they were necessarily constructed, they are very ugly and badly planned. Since my arrival here I have been sharing a stable with a brother officer, until I can build something better. My new house shall not, however, cost more than thirty or forty pounds. Even the laying out of that sum will put me to some inconvenience for a few months, as the expense was quite unexpected.

'I like what I have seen of my brother officers very much, and the corps is considered a first-rate one. My march up here was very pleasant, being in the coldest part of the year. I, however, met with two losses, great ones to a subaltern. At Meerut one of my servants robbed me of my spoons and forks, and at Karnoul my tent was cut open at night, by some practised thieves, and a small trunk in which were my pistols, my dressing case, which belonged to my poor father, about ten pounds in money, and various other articles, were carried off. As usual all attempts to discover proved of no [avail ?]. On my arrival here, the twenty-third of this month, I was much gratified to find your letters of date November and December awaiting my arrival. . . . You write that Uncle Hogg has offered a cadet-ship for Alexander if the Nicholson family will

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pay for his outfit.[1] I am sure they would not, and asking would only irritate them. I do not besides think Alexander at all fitted for it. Should the Bellinghams offer to make ANYTHING of him, I would by all means accept their offer. A cadetship would do for James, when he is sixteen, much better, and I think that by that time I might be able to pay his outfit and passage; I mean, if I am at all fortunate as far as promotion goes. I am now 3rd Ensign, and if in two or three years I should get my Lieutenancy, and should get an Adjutancy or Interpretership, or any little regimental promotion, I could, I am sure, bring him out.

'I am very sorry to hear you have met with so much annoyance respecting rents, &c. I hope matters have been settled to your satisfaction by this time, but, my dear mother, I never would (as long as there was the remotest probability of matters being amicably settled), expose one of my own relations by a law suit.

. . . . . .

'Believe me, dearest Mother,

'Your ever affectionate Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

'*March* 30.'

[1] Both his brothers, Alexander and James, went out to India and died out there.

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This postscript follows :—

'I do not know whether I mentioned to you that I had managed to preserve the little locket with your hair in it. It was the only thing worth a shilling that was kept by any of us; and I was allowed to keep it, because, when desired to give it up, I lost my temper and threw it at the Sirdar's head, which was certainly a thoughtless, and head-endangering act. However, he seemed to like it, for he gave strict orders that the locket was not to be taken from me.'

It has been often said that Nicholson, though absolutely just, and a rigid disciplinarian with the natives under his command, was yet, from his unyielding sternness, and unbending determination to be obeyed at all costs, far more feared than loved. There have been grim stories circulated as to punishments he caused to be executed on rebellious natives. It may be said with truth, that he had no touch of that strong sympathy which laid the foundation of that wonderful friendship and understanding which existed between James Outram, Colonel Ovans, and others, and the natives under their employ and jurisdiction. But very early in his Indian career Nicholson had had to pass through the

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scathing ordeal of his brother's death and mutilation at the hands of the Afghans, which, it will easily be understood, made an indelible impression upon him—an impression which could never be effaced. Nevertheless, when he was deputy-commissioner in the Punjaub, such was the difference between his strong, just government and that administered by Sikh tyranny, that he was welcomed heartily by the greater number of those under his command. Later, in 1849, a Hindu devotee began to preach the worship of Nicholson, as an incarnation of the Brahmanic godhead.[1] It is true that for his newly-imposed worship the devotee received in exchange only threats, and vigour of speech and arm. Nevertheless, the worshipping sect grew and flourished. And after Nicholson's death several of the members asked to be instructed in Christianity, saying that if they ever wished to see him again, they must worship Nicholson's God.

In 1840, Colonel Trotter tells us, Lord Auckland's government had settled on the formation of cantonments for a strong brigade on the plain near the Satlaj and the town of Ferozepore. Nicholson's regiment was among those ordered for the work. Not very much later on, however, it was sent to

[1] Colonel Trotter, *Life of John Nicholson.*

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relieve another regiment which was serving in Afghanistan, and in January 1842 the war, against which, had the authorities been more far-seeing, precautions might have been taken, suddenly flamed in their midst. Defeat followed for Colonel Palmer and the English at Ghazni. Provisions ran short; winter was upon them, the affair was hopeless from the very first. All who were not shot down by the Afghans were imprisoned, and among these last was John Nicholson. After a long imprisonment the prisoners were released by the advance of Sale's column from Argandab, and with him was Sir Henry Lawrence.

To the Right Hon. Sir James Weir Hogg.

'FEROZEPORE,
'*April* 6, 1840.

'MY DEAR UNCLE,

'I arrived here on the twenty-third of last month, after a march of nearly three months from Benares. I was much gratified to find by letters from home up to December last, all were well. From what I have seen of my Regiment (the 27th) I like it very much: it is a corps highly spoken of.

'The Station is a very unpleasant one for a new comer, as there are no houses to be let. Ten years ago there was not a habitation of any

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description to be seen here, and it was only when the Army of the Indus marched past last year that orders were given for three regiments to hut themselves for the approaching winter. At present each officer on his arrival builds a bungalow for himself. I must follow this plan, as the hot weather is coming on, and build a couple of rooms, which will last me as long as the Corps remains here.

'I am now sharing with a brother officer the stable of an officer who has gone to Cabul. We are all on the *qui vive* for intelligence from China just now. Cabul, by all accounts, is quite quiet, and has almost ceased to afford us any interest. On my way up here I passed through Ludkiana. Whilst there I was introduced to Colonel Wade, the great political agent in this part of the country. He was very kind to me and gave me a Perwannah[1] to the Jemadar[2] of all the villages I should pass through on my way, ordering them to supply me with everything necessary on my paying for it. However, at several of these villages (which are in the Punjaub), the Jemadars desired the people to give me nothing, adding "what do we care for Colonel Wade? we are Seiks, you may" [word torn

[1] A licence, or order.

[2] A native military officer of inferior rank.

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out] "unless you bring an order from—Nas Nihal Singh." Fortunately I had a Naicks guard with me, and by threatening these refractory Seiks with a good flogging I managed to procure enough to eat.

'It is reported here that we cannot keep on good terms with the Lahore Court much longer, and what I have just mentioned, shows, I think, they do not like us.

'Believe me, dear Uncle,

'Your affectionate Nephew,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

To Alexander Nicholson.

'JELLALABAD,

'*February* 19, 1841.

'MY DEAR ALEXANDER,

'As Mamma writes to me that you will probably come as a Cadet in Spring next, I sit down to write you a few words of advice, which I am sure you will take, as I mean them, in good part. I must first say, however, that I was really sorry for your own sake to hear that you were rather idle. Depend upon it, you will deeply regret it, if you do not to the best of your ability improve the time you have left before you arrive in India. On board ship, you will have little to do; if you borrow a Straith's Fortification from one

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CASTLE TERRACE, LISBURN, IRELAND.

Where John Nicholson was born (the house covered with Ivy).

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of the Addiscombe Cadets on board, and study it well, you may find a knowledge of fortification of great advantage to you hereafter. You should also endeavour to improve your manners, on your passage, as without good manners you can never advance yourself.

'Be reserved and prudent in your communications with your fellow-passengers, and with those with whom you may be associated on your arrival in this country.

'I suppose you know that I have been in Cabul for some time; it is a dreary tract of country, and I hope you will not be ordered up there. We go out the day after to-morrow, to reduce some small but strong hill forts at a place called Peish Bolak; and there is no saying how long we shall be out. How do you like England? not so well as Ireland, I suppose. I was very sorry that circumstances rendered a move necessary. . . . I hope to pass my examination in the native languages. I should have done so months ago, were it not for this marching continually. . . .

'Your affectionate Brother,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

The next letter relates to the death of Nicholson's younger brother, Alexander, who

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had but just come out to India. He was killed in action by the robber tribes of the Khaiber.

Quite unexpectedly, when he was riding down the pass with his friend Ensign Dennys, John Nicholson found a body, naked and fearfully mutilated, lying off the line of march. The knowledge was suddenly borne in upon him, as he gazed at the face of the dead man, that it was his own brother whom he had last seen well and strong at Dacca. Can one wonder that he speaks of the Afghans in the letter to his mother as 'the most vicious and bloodthirsty race in existence, who fight merely for love of bloodshed and plunder'? Can one wonder that he adds in that same letter, when the scene was still, with ghastly vividness, in his memory, 'I was sorry to leave Cabul while one stone of it remained on another.'

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'CAMP PESHAWUR,
'*November* 8, 1842.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'I wrote to you yesterday, but as letter bags are sometimes lost in this country, I sit down to inform you again, of what I entreat you to bear with Christian resignation and fortitude,

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and sorrow not for him that is gone as one without hope, but rejoice, rather, that it has pleased God to remove him from this world of sorrow and temptation. How true it is that "In the midst of life we are in death." Just this day week I met poor Alexander at Dacca, and you may imagine we were both happy at meeting after our long separation. Three days after I placed him in his grave; but it is a consolation to me that he met a glorious death. He was killed in action, near Ali Musjid, on the night of the 3rd inst. He was a great favourite with the officers of his corps, who all speak in high terms of his courage and amiable qualities. Indeed I never saw a boy more improved than he was, and deeply do I feel his loss. It will be a consolation to you to know that he was buried by a clergyman of the Church of England. Few have been, who have perished in this country. I am keeping some little things of his which I will send you by Lieutenant Olpherts of H.M. 48th, who is going home soon. The rest of his property when auctioned will, with his back pay, amount to about £100. This I will make arrangements for having sent to you, immediately on our arrival in Hindustan. He was entitled to a silver medal as one of the army

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at Jellalabad. When it arrives I will also send it you. There were many subjects on which I had intended [to write] to you, but I must keep them for my next. I hope both you and grandmamma enjoy good health. . . . Pray write soon and frequently; my greatest pleasure is hearing from you.

'With love to all, I remain,

'My dearest Mother,

'Your affectionate Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

'Please excuse the shortness of my letter, but I am not in spirits to write about anything at present.'

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'MEERUT,

'*April* 18, 1843.

'MY DEAR MOTHER,

'I duly received your and Mary's letters of January, and I was glad to learn from them that you had been enabled to bear up so well against the shock occasioned by the news of poor Alexander's death. The President of the Committee of Adjustment will, ere this, have communicated with you about his property. But some delay must necessarily take place before the accounts of the Cabul army are adjusted, and till then, the exact amount can scarcely

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be told. . . . You ask me to write you the details of the last year fully. I sent you from Ferozepoor a newspaper, containing a brief but well-written account of the siege of Ghuznee, and our imprisonment, after which nothing of any interest occurred. I cannot help being amused (though disgusted) at the ideas of the people at home, regarding the war in Afghanistan. One would suppose that the Afghans, instead of being the most vicious and bloodthirsty race in existence, who fight merely for love of bloodshed and plunder, were noble-minded patriots. The stories told, too, of the excesses committed by our troops are false, or greatly exaggerated. The villages or forts of only such people were destroyed, as had signalised themselves by their treachery and hostility towards the force of 1841. Cabul itself, for instance, . . . where a whole Regiment was destroyed without pity. Lydabad, where an officer and a hundred men were murdered in cold blood, as the Afghans[1] always do commit murder. I do not think myself the retribution was heavy enough, and I was sorry to leave Cabul while one stone of it remained on another.

[1] One is reminded of the beginning of the Afghan's prayer: 'O Thou, Who knowest how hard it is for an Afghan to be good'!

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'You will have heard of Sir C. Napier's two victories, the last of which has been so decisive that no more fighting is expected in that quarter. The Ranee of Khyteel, a protected Sikh State, . . . has taken up arms and is being joined by a considerable number of the disaffected in that quarter; a large force is in consequence ordered to take the field. A cavalry regiment left this yesterday by forced marches, and a European one will probably follow. Our friends the Sikhs are supposed to be assisting the old lady in an underhand manner.

'I was glad to hear that William and Charles were thinking of giving up the army; though I think it is a profession in which Charles would distinguish himself. Richard Olpherts and his sister, Mrs. Dunkin, are living here. I see them frequently, and like both exceedingly.

'Believe me,

'Your affectionate Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

To Mrs. Hogg.

'*May* 8, 1843.

'MY DEAR AUNT,

'The receipt of your letter a few days ago gave me great pleasure. When I wrote I

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feared my uncle's time would be too much occupied to allow of his writing in return, and I am very glad he deputed you to do so.

. . . . . .

'I am now studying as diligently as I can, but to study at all with the thermometer at 90° I do not find easy; however, I have no doubt of passing at the next public examination, which will take place in November. I had the pleasure of meeting John Swinton of the 53rd a few days ago. He made the journey to Meerut and back again, by the advice of his doctors, for the benefit of his health. He was in wonderfully good spirits considering the severe accident he had met with. Should he visit the plains again, he has promised to come and live with me.

'The Duke of Wellington, in his speech which we received by the last overland despatch, deals hardly with us poor unfortunates who were at Ghuzni. He says: "Ghuzni was surrendered without any pressure." That his Grace is a high military authority is beyond a doubt, but the want of water, or I should rather say of snow, for we never had any water, would, by most military men, I imagine, be considered rather a severe pressure. And when his Grace discovers his error, which he doubtless will when the papers concerning our

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Commandant's Court-Martial reach home, he will make the *amende honorable.*

'Believe me, my dear Aunt,

'Your affectionate nephew,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

Before his next letter to his mother, Nicholson had been moved with his regiment from Meerut to Moradabad,[1] an outpost in Rohilcund, within sight of the Himalayas. He mentions to his mother that he had been offered the adjutancy of his regiment. It was some time, however, before he accepted it, for his uncle's friend, Colonel Stuart, military secretary to the Indian Government, had led him to suppose that if he passed his examination he would be able to procure for him some 'better appointment.' However, later, Nicholson came to the conclusion that it would be far wiser to secure the 'bird in the hand,' consequently he accepted the adjutancy offered him. Nevertheless, in 1845, when the examination at Umballa had been successfully dealt with, the 'better appointment' really came, and Nicholson was made commissariat officer, thus proving to him that the good offices of Colonel Stuart, though delayed, were indeed to be depended upon.

There is something in this following letter

[1] Moradabad is a city in the district of the same name in the Province of Rohilcund.

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which reveals to us, more clearly than could anything else, the character of John Nicholson as a young man. He had been in great monetary difficulties, and, through no fault of his own, in debt, because after his imprisonment in Afghanistan, his loss of property was not made good to him, and his lieutenant's pay was but 120 rupees a month during those six months of imprisonment, and, as he says, 'this did not even half cover my losses or pay for a new outfit.' Nevertheless, his steady resolve, when once, by his self-denial and the steadiness of his resolute economy, he has freed himself from debt, is to send home £100 yearly to his mother, and he hopes also to pay for his brother's training at Addiscombe. To note these signs of a strong character in the making is well worth while, for they show very clearly the difficult steps which had to be cut in the life's ascent of this man who was later to be his country's hero and saviour.

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'MORADABAD,
'*Aug.* 7, 1843.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'Since I last wrote you, in June I believe, we have been removed from Meerut to Moradabad, an outpost in Rohilcund, where we now are, and which we like very much. I did not

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write to you by the last overland because I was on the road when the last packets for it left this, and on my arrival I found I was just a day too late.

'From what you say in your last letter of May 27th you will be glad to hear that I have accepted the adjutancy of my regiment, although I was a long time before I could make up my mind to do so, as I was in hopes that if I passed, Colonel Stuart might procure me some better appointment. However, before it was too late, I discovered that he was not to be depended on, and accepted the adjutancy, for which I am indebted to no one. I had so much to do for the first two months after I was appointed, that I was obliged to give up studying, and I have only just commenced again, but cannot give so much time to it as formerly.

'In your letter you say I must have plenty of money, as I drew arrears as a lieutenant. I was, it is true, a lieutenant during my imprisonment, but I did not get even ensign's allowances, nor was I allowed the 1450 rupees generally granted for compensation on account of loss of baggage in war. For the six months I was a prisoner I drew only 120 rupees a month, and this did not even half cover my losses or pay for a new outfit, so that I am really thrown into debt through no fault of my own. Before I knew that compensation allowance would be retrenched, I wrote to Uncle James

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promising him 1000 rupees of it, but that is out of the question now. I must first pay off my debts here, and then save the money. An adjutant's allowances are about 200 rupees a month more than his pay as a subaltern, and he has to keep up a charger and a writer or clerk. I have just paid 600 rupees for the former.

'In six months I have every reason to believe that I shall be out of debt, after which it is my intention to remit home £100 yearly. This, when Uncle James is paid, you, of course, will receive. I have written this much to prove that it is through no carelessness or extravagance of mine that I have not money at present, and I know many people at home labour under the delusion that poor subalterns in this country live luxuriously. Half the time I was in Afghanistan I paid 150 rupees a month and upwards, for camel hire, and that when my pay was 195 rupees—great luxury!

'The Major of poor Alexander's regiment requested me to leave his affairs to be adjusted by a committee, which I did, and requested that any arrears of pay and the amount of the sale of his effects might be sent you. If this has not been done let me know, and I will inquire the reason of the delay. . . .

'In reply to your questions concerning the Afghans, they are Mahomedans (*sic*), as I thought

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was well known at home, and they themselves claim descent from Saul, which I think not unlikely to be the case.

'You say nothing in your letter about the probability of a rebellion in Ireland, though the papers are full of it. The knowledge that you are in one of the most loyal parts of Protestant Ulster makes me feel less uneasy about you than I otherwise should. . . .

'Your affectionate son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

It will be remembered that, until the year 1838, there had been no definite movement in the country against the laws which taxed all corn on its importation into Great Britain. But in 1838 Cobden, John Bright, and Villiers started an Anti-Corn Law League, and upheld publicly the cause of the people who were the chief sufferers from this tax, which made their daily bread difficult to obtain. They met with much opposition from the owners of the land, and it was not until 1845 that Sir Robert Peel tried to repeal these unjust laws. Now, 1845 was the year of the Sikh war; it was also the year of another misfortune (for war must in the very nature of things be always a misfortune to a large proportion of those concerned), that of the Irish Famine, in consequence

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of the failure of the potato crops, through the plague of blight which fell upon them. The year 1846 was marked by the end of the Sikh war and by the passing of the Bill which abolished the tax on corn, but it happened too late (as is not seldom the case) to avert the ruin of thousands. Three years earlier the Irish, whose sufferings by unjust taxation had been far greater than those of England, though hitherto the loyalty of the North had been worthy of all praise, had agitated in vain for a different method of government.

The next letter is dated December 1843, and is to his sister Mary. It is very short, however, and the only items of interest concern the Repeal Agitation, about which he questioned Mrs. Nicholson in the last letter, and the flight of locusts which he had seen. As regards the effect of the agitation in Co. Down, he says: 'If the people are as loyal as they used to be, it will not make much way there.'

The flight of locusts he describes as being so large that 'at a distance they looked exactly like clouds. They have done great mischief in this part of India since summer.'

The following letter is dated January 1844, and here again, for those who are on the watch for the revelations of character that lie so often between the lines of a letter, are clear indications

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of the writer's nature. He had received no home letters for the last two mails, yet he does not on that account, (as would be the temptation of thoughtless, selfish characters), at once jump to the conclusion that none have been written. There are no half-injured, querulous complaints at his home people's forgetfulness and neglect. On the contrary, he takes it for granted that the reason for his disappointment does not lie at their door; rather it is the fault of the Bombay post-office.

He is full of his plans for defraying his brother Charles's training at Addiscombe, and very keen that he should not be among those who come out to India 'with no knowledge of their profession whatever, either practical or theoretical.' How right Nicholson was in his judgment of these young officers' lack of military knowledge was conclusively proved later.

And, unfortunately, it was not only their lack of military knowledge which made them an element of danger to their country, it was the lack of any power of understanding the native soldiers' point of view, the constant disregard of native religious prejudices, and the way they attempted to ride over these last roughshod, which hastened, without doubt, the final 'strike'—the mutiny of 1857.

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CHARLES NICHOLSON.

From a coloured photo belonging to Dr. Theodore Maxwell, and reproduced here by the latter's kind permission.

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'MORADABAD,
'*January* 8, 1844.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'I was disappointed at not receiving any home letters by either of the last two mails. I have no doubt about the letters having been written, and I fancy [they] were lost or mislaid at Bombay post office, in which great carelessness and irregularity exists. . . .

. . . . . .

'I have been thinking that Charles must be now fourteen, and old enough to go to Addiscombe. If so, in my opinion, the sooner he goes there the better, for, though more expensive than a direct appointment, it is worth the money—that is, the education he may receive there, if diligent, is worth the expense, which, as I before said, I will defray.

'Young men who come out to India with direct appointment have no knowledge of their profession whatever, either practical or theoretical; and are sometimes, very shortly after their arrival, placed in responsible situations (as many subalterns were in Afghanistan, the other day), when a military education would be of invaluable advantage to them.

'I took my accounts this morning, and I believe, that, please God, I shall be able to send

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you £100 by the mail which leaves Bombay on June 1, which ought to pay C.'s expenses for nearly a year, at least, at Addiscombe, and I believe I can manage to remit a similar sum in a twelvemonth afterwards. I should have £200 now, in hard cash, had I got all my allowances when a prisoner, and compensation for the loss of luggage, which I was entitled to, and which Government very shabbily retrenched.

'You will know by this mail of the fight which has taken place at Gwalior. Richard Olpherts' regiment, the 40th, were in it and suffered severely. He will be much vexed that he was not present with it.

'Your affectionate Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

The next letter is not until November 1846. It is necessary to remember that in 1845 war was declared between the British forces and the Sikhs. By this time Nicholson had been made commissariat officer, and he was carrying out his new duties at the battle of Ferozepore. After the taking of Lahore, the first Sikh war came to an end.

A little later Sir Henry Hardinge sent Captain Broome and Nicholson to Cashmere to help train

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the Dogra troops in European methods of warfare. Not more than three months before the following letter was written, insurrection had broken out in Cashmere, and after Nicholson's long term of sickness and loneliness in Cashmere, Sir Henry Lawrence, who had recognised his splendid capabilities, appointed him as assistant to the Resident at Lahore (North-West Frontier Agency). It was during the last days of the year 1846, as Colonel Trotter says in his 'Life of John Nicholson,' that 'Colonel Henry Lawrence, still a captain in the Bengal Artillery, became, by consent of all his Sikh colleagues, sole Regent of the Punjâb.' It was now that Nicholson's real work in India, by which his name was soon to be famous all over the world, began.

To Charles Nicholson.

'CASHMERE,
'*November* 23, 1846.

'MY DEAR CHARLES,

'Yours of the 4th reached me last night. I am sorry to hear you will have the trouble of marching up to Almorah, just to march down again.

'I would have written to you on my arrival here a fortnight ago, but I was then, and have

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been since, laid up with a severe attack of fever and ague. I am now getting better, but living in an open house. I dread a relapse, as the weather is very raw and cold. 'Lawrence, Broome and the others started on their return on the 16th, and I am quite alone here.

'Between ourselves, Lawrence has appointed me to officiate in the Agency pending a reply to his application to Government, to have me permanently appointed to it. In the event of its being favourable, I shall leave Cashmere when my work is finished, and go down either to Lahore or the Jullender, wherever it may be decided to station me. In either case, I hope we shall have the pleasure of meeting one another. . . . Our mother asks me if I intend availing myself of my furlough when entitled to it.

'I have suffered so much from ill-health within the last eight months that, unless some improvement takes place, I fear I shall be obliged to go out of India somewhere on the S.C. before long. I have had more sickness within this twelvemonth than in the previous six and a half years, and I sometimes fear that my constitution is going.

'Nothing brings home to a man's mind more readily than illness. He then thinks of the nursing and grateful acts of attention he would

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receive were he among his own friends. Here, I have not even the sight of a white face to cheer me. May you never be in a like predicament.

'Believe me, dear Charles,

'Yours affectionately,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

An interval of nearly four years elapsed between this letter and the next. In 1847 Sir Henry Lawrence set Nicholson in authority over the land between the Jhilam and the Indus. Here the latter worked hard to bring peace to the district, and succeeded so well that before the year ended he was able to report that the disturbances which had been so continual had now at last ceased. For, in Nicholson, lawlessness (which formerly carried things before it unimpeded) recognised a force which there was no evading. The natives came to know that nothing could evade his resistless strength of purpose. No villager came in vain to him for help against the injustices which had formerly been inflicted without possibility of redress. Everywhere he was known for a strong, unswerving force for good, and none dared to trifle with him. Nicholson never saved himself. Even though ill in bed with a bad attack of fever, when Lawrence came to tell him of the rebellion in Haripur, he said at once: 'Never mind

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the fever; I will start to-night.' Perhaps there is no test of an indomitable will like that shown when severe illness is triumphed over. Most men take the passport which illness confers on them for a justifiable slackness. Few there are who, like Nicholson, can *will* the body to be subservient to the determination of the spirit. Sir John Kaye[1] quotes the words of a brother officer, who was present when Nicholson shook off his attack of fever at the call of duty:—

'Never shall I forget him as he prepared for his start, full of that noble reliance in the presence and protection of God, which, added to an unusual share of physical courage, rendered him almost invincible. It was during the few hours of his preparation for departure that his conduct and manner led to my first knowledge of his true character, and I stood and watched him, so full of spirit and self-reliance, though only just risen from a sick-bed, with the greatest admiration.'

When the mutinous regiment was reached, matters were so promptly dealt with that in a very short time order was restored. In fact, by March 1849 the rebel forces were entirely defeated, and the

[1] Sir John Kaye quotes these words somewhat differently in his *Lives of Indian Officers* than does Colonel Trotter in his *Life of John Nicholson.*

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Punjaub annexed by the British army. Nicholson was made Deputy-Commissioner under the Lahore Board, of which Sir Henry Lawrence was President.[1]

Throughout the whole of 1846 Nicholson had been in constant ill-health. So pronounced, indeed, was it that, as is shown by his letter, he began seriously to fear that it meant the ruin of his constitution. He was living practically alone, without the 'sight of one white face to cheer' him. That the burden of a great and ever-present loneliness was sorely trying him, is evident from his letter home. Yet the whole time he is planning how to send more money home in order to help his mother and start his brothers in life. I think this alone would have shown of what spiritual material he was built. For if one thing is more certain than another, it is that ill-health mars the weaker personality and breaks up its mental calibre, and fatally slackens its moral stamina.

Here, then, was strong testimony that in Nicholson were the makings of a hero. By the power of character he at once conquered the demands of the sick body. Is there anything in all the world which is a greater

[1] Sir John Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers.*

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triumph than the splendid force of will which can fling pain aside at the clear call of duty?

During the ten years Nicholson had been in India, he had constantly been ill, and he came to the decision, in 1850, that he would go on furlough to England. One special reason brought him to this determination at this time, and this was, as usual, more concerned with his thought for other people than for himself. His young brother William had died from the effects of a bad accident in India, and John Nicholson, who was always full of thoughtfulness for his mother, felt that he was needed at home to help her bear this trial.

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'H.M. Steamship *Porcupine*,
'OFF THE PIRAEUS,
'*March* 20, 1850.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'My hands are so numb, and there is so much motion owing to a heavy sea, that you must not be disappointed at getting a very short letter. I reached Constantinople on 26th ultimo, and left on 15th in the French steamer *Lycurge*. Why I remained three weeks instead of only one as I intended, I will tell you when we meet,

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and you will not disapprove of my motives. On the morning of the 16th we ran aground in a snowstorm in the Dardanells (*sic*), and failing to set off again, the *Porcupine* took us up yesterday on her way to the Piraeus with despatches.

'I shall not remain more than a week at Athens, and shall thence go direct to Trieste. I hope to be in London by the middle of April. . . .

'Believe me, my dear Mother,

'Your affecte. Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

It was about this time[1] that Sir Henry Lawrence, whose attention had been drawn from time to time to the fact that Nicholson possessed a fiery temper, which, in his opinion, he did not keep sufficiently under control in his dealings with natives and Europeans, wrote to him urging him 'as a friend' to curb and restrain it. He saw that he did harm to himself by his habit of being too outspoken, and of saying out, without hesitation, what he thought of people. 'Don't think it is necessary to say all you think to everyone. The world would be

[1] See *Lives of Indian Officers*, by Sir John Kaye.

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one mass of tumult if we all gave *candid* opinions of each other. I admire your sincerity as much as any man can do, but say thus much as a general warning. . . . From what I saw in camp, I think you have done much towards conquering yourself; and I hope to see the conquest completed.'

A less great nature might perhaps have taken offence at being thus found fault with by his superior officer, but Nicholson showed by his answer that he had taken it all in good part, though he defends his having spoken openly to the English officers of the Punjaub army in condemning their habit of plundering the natives, though he was aware his venturing to do so had brought upon him a great deal of unpopularity. For the faults of temper, he writes, after thanking Sir Henry for the 'friendly advice,' 'I am not ignorant of the faults of my temper, and you are right in supposing that I do endeavour to overcome them—I hope with increasing success. . . . I readily admit that my temper is a very excitable one, and wants a good deal of curbing. A knowledge of the disease is said to be half the cure, and I trust the remaining half will not be long before it is effected.'

In connexion with the subject of Nicholson's

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sudden outbursts of temper, I shall quote here a story told me by General Broadfoot.

Nicholson had served under the latter in 1841; and in 1845 General Broadfoot was appointed political agent for the North-West frontier. He became a great hero of Nicholson's, so that in some crucial difficulty it became the habit of his mind to say to his great friend, Sir Herbert Edwardes, 'Let us think how Broadfoot would have acted in the present case,' when the two could not agree as to the best way to confront the matter in hand.

General Broadfoot's story was told him by his old friend and brother officer, the late Major-General Ralph Young, and it illustrates Nicholson's quickness of temper, of which I have just been speaking.

Major-General Young met Nicholson in 1847, when the two officers had just returned from Cashmere. They had come out by different routes, and Young on his arrival found another tent pitched. On hearing that Nicholson was in this tent, Young, as junior officer, called upon Nicholson. Nicholson received him with no particular cordiality, and, for something to say, remarked, 'I 'm the senior officer, and ought to ask you to dinner, but I have no plates and not much food.' Young replied that that did

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not greatly matter, as his own plates and dinner could be brought to Nicholson's tent, and they could thus dine together. Nicholson agreed, and it was arranged. During dinner, Nicholson's table servant offended him in some way, and in a sudden anger he took up his tumbler and threw it at the man. It missed aim, but hit the tent pole and was broken to pieces. 'There goes my last tumbler!' was all Nicholson's comment on what had occurred.

The next letter is very much later than the last given, and is written from Camp Kohat in April 1854.

Here again, in this letter, we are brought face to face with Nicholson's unceasing thoughtfulness for his mother, and shows how, at work in a far distant country, he yet remembered how she (as well as his hero, George Broadfoot), 'would have acted.' He gives (anonymously [1]), for her sake, 500 rupees to a mission at Peshawur.

On the second page there is a striking testimony to his thoughtfulness for other people in financial matters, and to his recognition of the sacred duties which should follow in the

[1] Colonel Trotter says in his *Life of John Nicholson* that it was against the Company's rules of discipline for one of their officers to take an open part in one of their missions.

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wake of such a relationship as that of friendship. He cannot bear that his mother should receive rent from a friend. To quote his own words: 'It would seem to me inconsistent with the friendly relations which I believe exist between you, to take rent for accommodation which one friend should be happy to have an opportunity of affording another.'

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'CAMP KOHAT,
'*April* 13, 1854.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'I came in here this morning from Peshawur, where I have been spending a few days with the Edwardes.[1] You will see by the papers that preparations are in progress for the establishment of a mission at Peshawur. I have given 500 rupees towards it on your account, but my name will not appear on the subscription list, as for certain reasons I have preferred subscribing anonymously. . . . If you have not yet received any rent from the Caldbecks, I would ask you not to take any. It would seem to me inconsistent with the friendly relations which I believe exist between you, to take rent

[1] Nicholson said that his visits to Sir Herbert and Lady Edwardes always made him feel a better man.

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for accommodation which one friend should be happy to have an opportunity of affording another. . . . Where do you think of spending the coming summer? I hope you will go to the seaside; sea-bathing seems to agree so well with you and Lily. Charles has not quite made up his mind whether he will visit Cashmere or not. By the new furlough rules, all leave counts alike, whether at home or in India, so that anyone intending to avail one's self of European furlough would be unwise to take leave in India.

. . . . . .

'Yours affectionately,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

At the end of the year 1854 Nicholson applied for the post of command of the Punjaub Frontier Force, which had just become vacant. Then, later, he heard that his old friend Colonel Neville Chamberlain had been offered this command. Nicholson wrote at once withdrawing his application, and sent a letter to Chamberlain openly, saying that he considered his friend's claims to be greater than were his own, and that he wished him all success.

Perhaps the non-arrival of a letter at a crucial period of one's life is more fruitful of evil consequences, more likely to poison a

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friendship, than anything else. A misunderstanding such as this rankles in the mind of the sender, and it is sometimes almost out of his power to clear it up. This was the case with Nicholson with regard to this letter to Chamberlain, which he had sent with such a spontaneous, heartfelt message of goodwill. For Chamberlain never got his messages, owing to the miscarriage of the letter; and as day followed day, and week succeeded week, and no answer came, Nicholson grew more and more hurt at his friend's silence.[1] Later, as perhaps was not unnatural, he grew resentful, and when in a raid one of his most trusted Khans got killed owing to a garrison having failed to render him aid, he complained to the Chief Commissioner of the carelessness of the troops which were under Chamberlain's command. The latter was at once up in arms to refute this imputation, and letters followed between the two who had once been such close friends—letters of mutual recrimination which, alas, only too surely reached their destination. It was now that Sir John Lawrence stepped in, and tried his best to repair the breach. But all in vain, Nicholson was obdurate. He firmly

[1] Ten years earlier, in 1844, his own trust had prevented a misunderstanding occurring in the case of the non-arrival of home letters.

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asserted that he had been in the right, for it *had* been carelessness which caused the death of that native. This was at the end of six months from the date of the misunderstanding, and some months later, when Chamberlain made some overtures of kindly feeling, Nicholson's determination was still where it had been in the matter of the garrison's carelessness. He refused to accept his former friend's reconciliation. In December, Sir John Lawrence made another earnest attempt to dispose of the apparently insuperable difficulties which kept Chamberlain and Nicholson apart, and this last effort was successful. Their hands met once more in a restored friendship, which lasted till the death of the latter, when it was Chamberlain who nursed him so untiringly and devotedly through the last days of suffering which followed his wound received at the storming of Delhi; and so Nicholson had the comfort—which every one would love to have at his last hour—of the presence of one of his closest friends.

It was before the final reconciliation that Nicholson wrote to Sir Henry Lawrence asking him to give him a post out of the Punjaub. But Lawrence was very unwilling to do this, on account of the splendid work which Nicholson had been doing in bringing order and discipline

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to districts where previously they had been unknown.

When the war with Persia was declared, however, he was sent to work under Sir Herbert Edwardes at Peshawur. And in May 1857 came the mutiny. Nicholson's first thought was that a movable column must immediately be raised, to march from place to place over the Punjaub and deal promptly and *at once* with the mutineers. This was followed by others, which were equally approved by his chief, and in June Nicholson was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General.[1]

To Mrs. Nicholson.

'PESHAWUR,
'*May* 16, 1857.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'I wrote you fully yesterday, *viâ* Kurachee, but lest the letter should not reach Bombay in time for the mail of the 28th, I write a few lines *viâ* Agra, to say I am quite well, and that the Punjab is perfectly quiet.

'I hope this will find you enjoying yourself at some sea-bathing place. There have been disturbances among the native troops in the N.W. Provinces, but they have not extended

[1] Colonel Trotter, *Life of John Nicholson.*

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to the Punjab, and I trust are not likely to do so. Charles also is well. . . .

'Ever dear Mother,

'Yr. affecte. Son,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

This letter which I am just about to give is the last letter which his mother ever received from him.

'PESHAWUR,

'*June* 12, 1857.

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'I just write a few lines to tell you that we are quiet here, and have made ourselves very secure, by disarming all the disaffected native regiments. Charles is with a wing of his regiment in the neighbourhood of Lahore.

'Do not be under any apprehension about either of us. I consider that we are stronger in the Punjab at this moment than in any other part of the Bengal Presidency. With love to all,

'Ever dear Mother,

'Yours affectly.,

'J. NICHOLSON.'

It will be remembered that Charles Nicholson went out to India about the year 1847, and

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CHARLES NICHOLSON.

From a painting belonging to Dr. Maxwell.

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when John Nicholson met him he was with his regiment in the Punjaub.

Charles was his favourite brother, and the friendship which existed between the two, though a quiet and undemonstrative one, was very real and deep. Who can ever forget that last quiet meeting of the brothers after the storming of Delhi? As the elder, mortally wounded, and the other, with his arm amputated, lay side by side not speaking, but each taking their last long look at the other before the final immeasurable parting. There are times, I suppose, for most of us, when in one long farewell look into the eyes of someone is crowded (like the last conscious time in drowning before death sets in) all the past—all one's memories of it, all one's conception of what those same memories meant; and in this silence, which is greater and deeper than any words, we 'catch up the whole of life and utter it' at the soul's gate of egress. Such I have always thought was that wonderful, silent, last interview between the brothers.

Charles Nicholson lived five years longer than his brother, and died in 1862. He had left India on sick leave the year after the mutiny, and came back to his mother in Lisburn, County Down. In 1859 he went to the United States, and the same year married Elizabeth Gillilan.

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He brought her home a month after their marriage. And now it was discovered that, in the amputation of his arm after the siege of Delhi, injury had been done to one of his lungs. Consequently he was ordered to spend his winters abroad. And it was, I believe, about this time that his mother tried to get him some appointment near home, to prevent the necessity of his having to return to India. This letter is given here. That it was not successful is proved by the fact that when Sir Hugh Rose in 1862 offered him the command of a Gurkha regiment in Northern India,[1] Charles accepted it. It is difficult to understand how his doctors could have permitted his return to India, considering the delicate state of his health, and disastrous that they did so, for only a few months elapsed before the end came from the breaking of a blood-vessel, while he was journeying up country towards Almorah.

Mrs. Nicholson, having lost all her sons, and, in fact, all her children but one daughter, lived on until the year 1874, when she died at the age of eighty-eight.

In 1855 Charles Nicholson writes to his sister Mary, who, in 1845, had married the Rev. Edward Maxwell. The 'Theodore' mentioned

[1] Colonel Trotter, *Life of John Nicholson.*

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is Dr. Theodore Maxwell, to whose kindness I am indebted for access to these letters.

'DERA GHAZIE KHAN,
'*June* 13, 1855.

'MY DEAR MARY,

'I had a foreboding that when once I got this appointment the regularity of my own correspondence, for which I have latterly been extolled, would become impaired, and truly I am not to be blamed for it. Since I wrote last to my mother I have made a tour of my "beat" (to use a professional word). It is 200 miles long, and although that distance may seem nothing to you, I assure [you] that in this weather it is an arduous undertaking. In the cold season such a ride is not unpleasant to a person in good health—but now the heat is great, and the horses always are made lazy by it—so although I was only absent for a fortnight, I came back considerably reduced in weight, and as sick of travelling as if I had gone round the world. But even when at home my time is taken up by parades in the morning, office work till two, sleep till evening, and though I don't mean to say that I couldn't manage a letter between these important avocations, yet you must recollect that so much work is unusual to me, and that if I'm lazy, so is everybody else in this wretched country. *It is the climate*, because last

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year in Cashmere I never thought of sleeping in the daytime, in fact my activity rivalled that of my schoolboy days, when daresay you recollect I was seldom in the house between breakfast and dinner. There is a hill about thirty miles off, just high enough to be cool, and next month I mean to take refuge there from the heat. John intends to come up from Bunna [?], so I hope we shall get very pleasantly through the remainder of the hot months.

'I 'm sorry Theodore[1] is not to have a pony, but I 've no doubt you know best. My mother mentions that she hopes to be visited by you this summer, and indeed I hope she may not be disappointed; it often makes me sad to think how lonely she must feel now. I used as a child sometimes to wonder whether she would be left without a son, and *almost* to determine that if it depended on me—it should not happen so. . . .

'How Edward would enjoy Cashmere! I think of it with a feeling of painful regret, and I am absolutely obliged to put a restraint upon my fancy when it takes that direction, lest it should lead me into the folly of sacrificing anything to get back. . . .

'Goodbye, ever yr. affect. brother,

'C. NICHOLSON.'

[1] Dr. Theodore Maxwell.

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There is a melancholy interest about this letter, as upon the envelope in which it is folded, is written 'not found till after his death.'

Nearly four years later is dated the following letter to Charles from Sir Herbert Edwardes, and relates to the question of writing John Nicholson's biography. It is full of interest. The allusion at the end to the post at Haileybury Depôt shows that Charles was carrying out his intention of determining that his mother should not finally be left alone with no son with her.

It is rare that men of action—military action—are men of high literary ability. And it is easy to understand this. The two things are so absolutely opposed. A soldier's mind is not a meditative one, but tends rather to be calculating, statistical, and prompt in action. There is, however, evidence of great force of character in the letters of two of the most renowned officers of the last century—Sir James Outram and General Nicholson—but they showed no 'literary ability.' They were concise, and lacking in originality of literary form. They were the typical soldier's letters of great and unselfish men of action. Sir Herbert Edwardes seems to have seen 'literary ability'—uncultivated—in Charles Nicholson's way of expressing himself, and it is quite possible that he is right. Certainly he possessed it himself, though

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perhaps one may be inclined to question if, after all, the 'secret of writing *is* feeling.' In the letter which follows, he very graphically points to the two striking characteristics of John's personality: 'His character had two strong phases: the power of his public, and the tenderness of his private life.'

It was Sir Herbert Edwardes who had more opportunity than had almost anyone of knowing his real character. For the two were close friends. Perhaps friendship has a clearer gaze into the depths of a character than is possible to any other relationship. Of no phase in that character have they grown accustomed to think slightingly, as is often the case with a brother or sister. No intimate familiarity of intercourse has dulled the freshness of some striking characteristic, as is possible in the case of a husband or wife. No, the friend comes straight, untrammelled by the levelling-down process of family life, to see with clear, unprejudiced eye the striking points which gleam fresh on his vision, and the weaknesses which are the reverse side of the shield. Every-one remembers Sir Herbert Edwardes' words: 'Of what class is John Nicholson the type? Of none, for truly he stands alone. But he belongs essentially to the school of Henry Lawrence. . . . It is difficult to describe him. He must be seen.

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. . . I can only say that I think him equally fit to be commissioner of a division, or general of an army.' And again: 'Nature makes but few such men, and the Punjab is happy in having had one.' And, after Nicholson had fallen in the storming of Delhi: 'Henry Lawrence was as the father and John Nicholson the brother of my public life. . . . Never, never again can I hope for such a friend. How grand, how glorious a piece of handiwork he was! . . . And then his nature so fully equal to his frame! so undaunted, so noble, so tender, so good, so stern to evil, so singleminded, so generous, so heroic, yet so modest. I never saw another like him, and never expect to do so. And to have had him for a brother, and now to have lost him in the prime of life—it is an inexpressible and irreparable grief.'

To Charles Nicholson.

'WEST FARM, EAST BARNETT,
'HERTS, *January* 2, 1859.

'MY DEAR NICHOLSON,

'You were right, I think, to decline Mr. Johnstone's offer of writing John's Life. No one *could* do it who had not *known* him, and before whose memory he is not still distinctly visible. I am, as you know, pledged already to

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one such sad biography; and for one reason or other have done nothing of it yet, but the collection of materials; and when it will be accomplished who shall say? So that I shrink from undertaking another. At the same time it is my full intention, as I told your dear mother, to make John the chief figure in the group of good, true men who stood in those days round Sir Henry; and, in fact, to give him as great a space as I could fitly do in a Life not *his*. But I would gladly see more done than this; and I can point out one who would do it well, and with head and heart: I mean John Becher. He has taken furlough, and must be about now leaving India. His admiration and love for John could scarcely be exceeded except by yourself or your mother; and his powers of writing are in many ways better than mine. He will be quite at leisure, and, if I know his mind at all, would accept the labour willingly. I would myself be glad to help him with materials and other aid, as he will help me in my Life of Sir Henry. Ask him. But what hinders you from writing John's life yourself? His character had two strong phases: the power of his public, and the tenderness of his private life. Of the former you know nearly as much, and of the latter, more than anyone out of your own family can; for it lies hid in the early years

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of his childhood, and must be *recovered* from your own and your mother's memories. As far as literary ability is concerned, it seems to me you have it without using it, and from want of cultivating it or from want of an object are letting a talent be idle. The secret of *writing* is *feeling*, and John's life would come better from your own pen than anyone else's.

'Emma,[1] I know, sent you our kindest love on your marriage, but I would add it again with all my heart. May you both have all the happiness and sympathy that we have had, and as much less of trial as may be thought good for you by the Father, Who knows best. Come and see us as soon as you can manage it.

'I have heard nothing more about the Haileybury Depôt; don't name to anyone that this is what Sir John is trying to get for you, as Sir C. Wood is enjoying a rather long Christmas holiday.'

'Ever yours affectionately,

'HERBERT B. EDWARDES.'

The last of this series of letters is the one before mentioned, written by Mrs. Nicholson to the Earl of Derby.

[1] Lady Edwardes.

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To the Earl of Derby.

(There is no date on this letter, which I take to be a copy of the original.)

'My Lord,

'As the mother of General Nicholson, I beg leave to submit to your Lordship's consideration the following statement.

'I have lost three sons in the Indian army in defence of Her Majesty's dominions. My first was at the siege of Jellalabad, and was killed in the Kyber Pass. My second fell a victim of fever at Suken, that grave of Europeans. My third, General Nicholson, who earned for himself the fatal but glorious distinction of leading the assault at the storming of Delhi. Of him, my Lord, I need not speak. His deeds are imperishable, and it was a mournful gratification to one to read your Lordships' eloquent and generous tribute of praise to his memory, spoken in the House of Lords at the opening of the session. From my heart I thank your Lordship for it.

'I have still, thank God, one son remaining, and he lost his right arm at the siege of Delhi in command of Coke's Rifles. He was invalided and sent home. It is for him I now solicit the honour and favour of your Lordship's powerful patronage. I cannot bear the thought that my only surviving son should return to India, where his three [brothers] found an early grave. My

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request is that your Lordship will kindly give him some government appointment either in England or Ireland that will keep him at home. That your Lordship may know what situation he is qualified to hold, pray allow me briefly to give an outline of his twelve years' service in India: First, an infantry officer through all the Punjab campaign, for which he got a medal, was Aide-de-Camp to Sir J. Thackwell at the battle of Chillianwallah, and his regiment, the 31st, received the thanks of the General in command. He was at the end of the campaign transferred to the Punjab Cavalry by Sir H. Lawrence, first as adjutant and afterwards second in command. The two years previous to the Mutiny he acted as Captain of the Punjab Police Force for the officer in command, who was in Europe on medical certificate.

'On the officer's return, my son rejoined his own troop, and was with it at Delhi. But when all the principal officers of Coke's Rifles were either killed or wounded, he volunteered to take command of them . . . and on that memorable day led them into action, when he lost his right arm. . . .

'I remain,

'Your Lordship's humble and obedient Servant,

'C. NICHOLSON.'

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